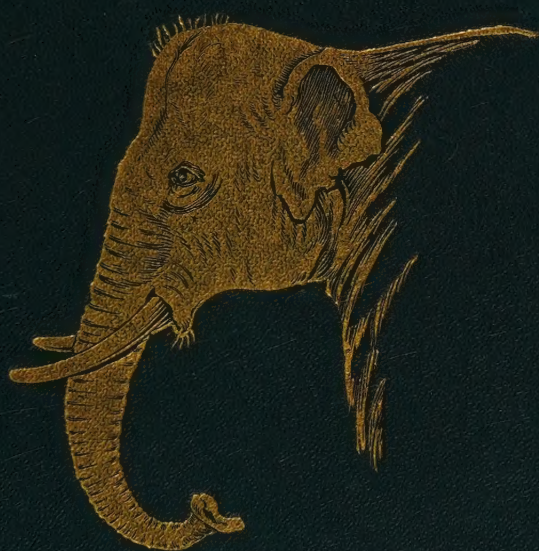
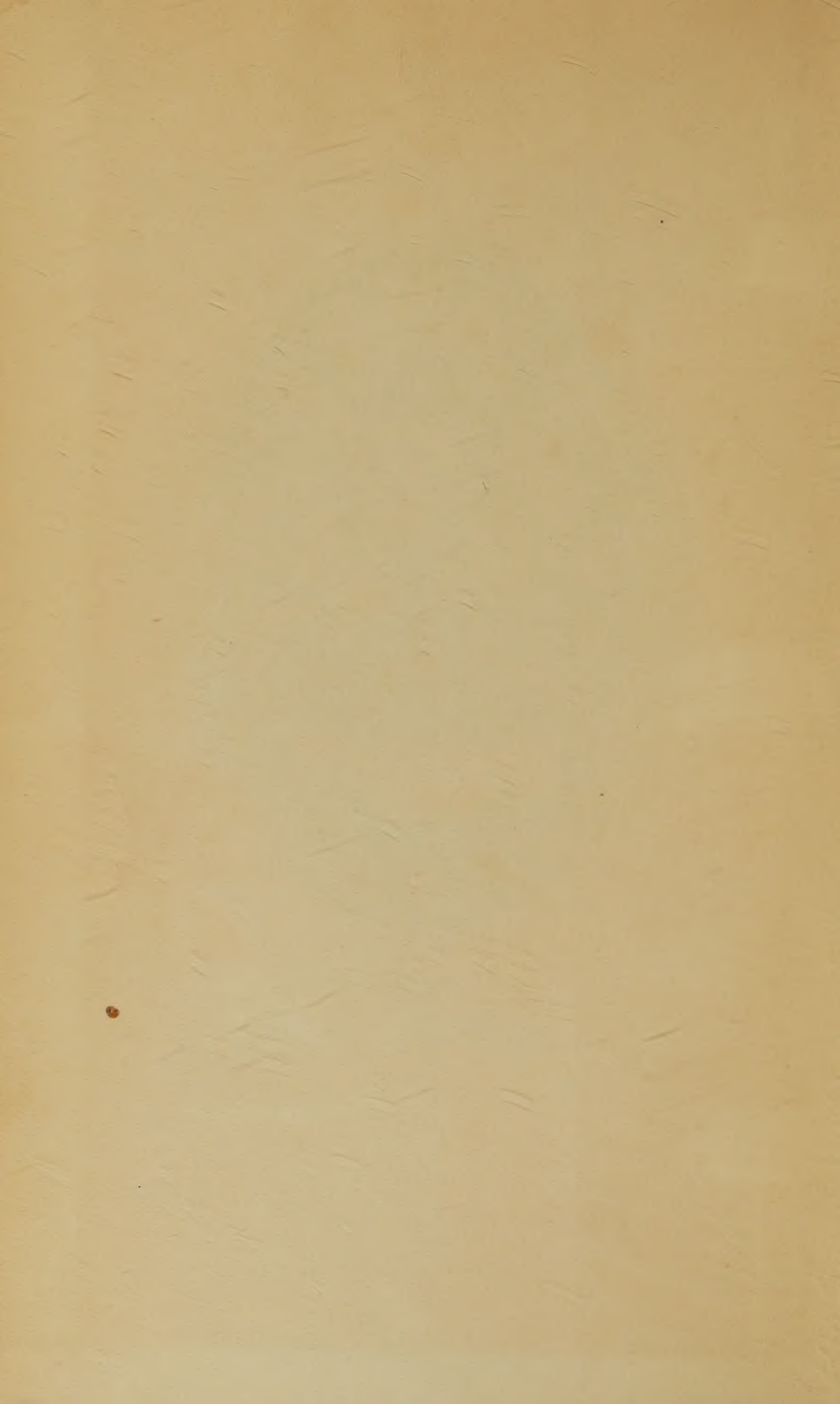






BIG-GAME SHOOTING IN UPPER BURMA



ELEPHANT TUSKS

BIG-GAME SHOOTING

IN

UPPER BURMA

BY
MAJOR G. P. EVANS
INDIAN ARMY



WITH A GLOSSARY OF BURMESE WORDS

A MAP AND 11 PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE AUTHOR'S COLLECTION OF TROPHIES

NEW IMPRESSION

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TO

C. A. E.

PREFACE

SOME apology is, perhaps, needed for this book. An excellent book on big-game shooting in Burma, entitled 'Wild Sports in Burma and Assam,' by joint authors Colonel Pollock and Mr. Thom of the Burma Police, has already been written, and, therefore, an additional book may seem superfluous. But Colonel Pollock wrote of shooting in Lower Burma many years ago, and, from the nature of the country, was obliged to do practically all his shooting from the back of an elephant. The present book, like Mr. Thom's portion of the work referred to, treats of shooting in Upper Burma only, and on foot. Although Mr. Thom's experiences and mine coincide in the main, there is a difference, due in part to the localities in which we have hunted. Mr. Thom did most of his shooting in one district, the Ruby Mines. I have never been to the Ruby Mines, but have shot in the districts of the Upper and Lower Chindwin, Shwebo, Sagaing, Meiktila, Magwe, and Yamethin; that

is to say, in the wet and dry zones alike. This would appear at first sight to make but little difference. In reality it affects the subject considerably, not on account of a wider experience, which I do not claim for a moment, but because the habits of animals differ in some degree according to the locality in which they are found. Mr. Thom's experiences with elephants, for instance, were gained chiefly while following single beasts, as one would naturally expect in the hilly country of the Ruby Mines. Mine, on the contrary, with few exceptions, were obtained with herds in the dry zone. Then, again, 'tsaing' found in the indaing forests of the dry and intermediate zones differ considerably in habits from those roaming in the bamboo jungles of the hills. 'Thamin' appear to call for a somewhat lengthier notice than that accorded to them in 'Wild Sports.' Finally, Mr. Thom had exceptional facilities for obtaining the best trackers in his district, and in writing of them he seems to have lost sight of the difficulties under which less fortunate individuals have laboured. In making these remarks I trust I shall not be misunderstood. I merely wish to point out that circumstances alter cases. I gratefully acknowledge that when I first began to shoot big game in Burma, Mr. Thom's portion of the book above mentioned

was of the greatest assistance to me. But I found myself so often hampered by incompetent trackers, as well as by my own ignorance, that I determined, when I had gained sufficient experience, to commit that experience to print, in the hope that newcomers might avoid the pitfalls into which I had myself fallen.

For the rest, I have only to say that I make no pretensions to the possession of literary talent, and beg my readers to excuse the lack of style which I fear the following pages will too surely portray. But I would ask them to believe that everything the book contains is the result of my own observations and experiences, and that I have in no way culled from others either descriptions or facts which I have been unable to corroborate.

I am indebted to the American Baptist Mission Press, Rangoon, for the excellent map which accompanies this volume.

It is hoped that the list of shooting localities at the end of the book, and the glossary of Burmese words likely to occur daily in the jungle, will be of use to those who are new to the country.

G. P. EVANS.

STRAND HOTEL, RANGOON,

August 25, 1910.

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BIG-GAME SHOOTING IN UPPER BURMA

CHAPTER I

THE INDIAN ELEPHANT (*ELEPHAS INDICUS*) (*Burmese, 'Sin' or 'Taw-sin'*)

A DETAILED description of the Indian elephant is unnecessary, familiar as he is to everyone ; though comparatively few men have seen elephants in their native wilds. It may, however, be as well to state that the elephant has normally five nails on each forefoot and four on each hind—not four on each foot, as is often supposed. The outside nails are comparatively small and crinkled, and their impression is only traceable in very wet soil. Ordinarily, in tracking, the imprint of at most three nails is to be seen, and that only on soft ground. The base of the trunk, the chest, forehead and ear are often covered with large, flesh-coloured spots. The natural colour of the elephant is a greyish black ; but as the wild elephant invariably keeps himself

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well plastered with mud, he presents a greyish brown or reddish appearance, according to the nature of the soil with which he has dusted himself. The age of an elephant can only be told approximately, by his general appearance. An old elephant is usually rather gaunt, the temple is much sunken, the upper edges of the ears are well turned over, and the lower edges are torn by the continual flapping of the ears. But an elephant in its prime as regards age may present an emaciated appearance due to illness, old wounds, &c., and the ears in this case can alone be relied on to give an indication of the animal's age. Elephants in a wild state live to an immense age, a hundred and fifty years or more. Authenticated cases of domesticated elephants over a hundred years of age in full work and vigour are on record, and these elephants would probably live for another fifty years, if lightly worked, before signs of decay appeared. Assuming that in the wild state animals live at least half as long again as they do in captivity, under unnatural conditions which must greatly shorten their lives, I think we are fully justified in putting the normal life of a wild elephant down as between one hundred and fifty and two hundred years. There must, indeed, be elephants which have roamed the jungle for considerably longer periods. As to height, a full-grown male averages about 9 ft. at the shoulder, females a foot less. Anything over 9 ft. is

a big elephant. Sanderson—no mean judge—refuses to believe in a 10-ft. elephant; but, though the opinion of so great an authority must be given full weight, there is no doubt that occasionally elephants do attain the height of 10 ft., and sometimes over. Several have been recorded over 10 ft. in height from Burma alone. I myself once shot an enormous elephant, by far the biggest I have ever seen. It was impossible to take his body measurement, as he fell with his forelegs doubled up under him, and lay more or less on his chest. But I took the exact measurements of his feet with a steel tape, both before they were cut off and afterwards, in the presence of several witnesses. They measured exactly 5 ft. 4 in. in circumference, both feet being the same size to within a fraction of an inch. Twice the circumference of an elephant's foot gives his height at the shoulder almost exactly. I have at different times purposely taken the body measurements of several elephants for comparison with those of the forefeet, and have invariably found the two measurements to correspond, the difference never exceeding an inch, and usually being considerably less. So that the elephant referred to above could not have been less than 10 ft. 7 in. at the shoulder, and may have stood as high as 10 ft. 9 in. His tusks weighed $99\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. the pair. Such monsters are, of course, very rare; but elephants over 9 ft. at the shoulder are not uncommon, and I think I

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am correct in saying that the majority of Indian elephants with tusks weighing over 60 lbs. the pair will be found to exceed 9 ft. in height. At the time of shooting this elephant, a cow stood alongside, the trunks of the two animals being practically level. The tusker towered so above his companion—a full-grown female—that I was able to fire over her head at the ear of the bull, a shot which would have been quite impossible if the tusker had not stood a good two feet higher than the cow. Both elephants were on the same level, quietly dozing;—a rude awakener for the poor old elephant; but man, when he sets out to slay, is a ruthless being.

An account of the hunt which ended in the death of this elephant may be worth giving. During October 1907 I was out in the Lower Chindwin district trying to locate the whereabouts of a big herd of elephants, which for some days had been doing damage to cultivation. Three days were spent in fruitless journeys from village to village in the area in which the herd had committed depredations, until I began to think that the elephants had left the district altogether; but on the fourth day perseverance was to be rewarded. I had with me at the time a Mohammedan orderly, by name Allah Din, a bit of a scamp, but a most useful ally, as he spoke Burmese like a native of the country, and was, moreover, a very plucky fellow. The only thing against him was that at a critical moment

he was apt to lose his head, and I had eventually to dispense with his services after he had twice bolted during a stampede of elephants, in one of which he was caught, narrowly escaping with his life. He got off without a bone being broken, the elephant fortunately contenting himself with kicking him once between fore and hind legs, and then leaving him. But it was over a month before he could walk without the use of a stick. This does not sound as if he had displayed any courage, but, as a matter of fact, nothing could be more plucky than the way in which on this, and on many former occasions, he had crept along unbidden at my heels, right into the middle of a big herd of elephants in thick jungle, armed only with an ordinary Martini-Henry rifle, and sometimes not even with this. It was only after the shot had been taken, and the stampede in our direction had followed, that he was seized with an unreasoning panic which he was unable to overcome. It is only fair to add that in his youth Allah Din had been caught by a tiger which he had wounded, and which he insisted on following up alone in long grass. The tiger inflicted severe injuries, mauling him badly, and biting his arm through to the bone, breaking it in two places. Allah Din recovered after a long spell in hospital, but this adventure had doubtless shaken his nerve. I have entered on this digression because Allah Din was, as you will see, mainly responsible for my bagging this

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elephant, the tusks of which were the finest trophy I ever obtained.

But to hark back to my subject. Early on the morning of the fourth day I moved camp some ten miles in the direction of a village, Thapan, not far from the township of Budalin. As we got near the village we were met by an excited party of villagers, who reported that the herd had visited their cultivation overnight, and was now pretty certain to be found in the Thapan jungles, some three miles from the village. Here was news indeed! Leaving word for my kit to be taken on to the village, Allah Din and I started off at once, accompanied by three villagers as trackers. It was now past eight o'clock, and though I felt pretty sure of getting up to the herd, the chances were that we should find the elephants resting in thick cover instead of feeding, thus making the search for a big tusker difficult. On approaching the jungle, which was bordered by a large sandy nullah, or 'choung' as it is called in Burma, I was disappointed at not finding any traces of the herd, and began to think my men were mistaken. But they were positive that the elephants were somewhere in that jungle, so we retraced our steps and tried in another direction, and at last hit off the fresh tracks of the herd. There had been no recent rain, and it proved a difficult business to follow the trail over an open grass plain. In due course we reached the choung,

and to my delight heard the elephants feeding in the jungle on the opposite bank. The cover, however, was very thick, and when I did get a glimpse of the herd it consisted, apparently, of a few animals only—all cows and small tuskers. We watched these for some time, during which the trackers got more and more excited, gesticulating and whispering whenever an elephant showed itself. There was one tusker somewhat larger than the others, with tusks weighing perhaps 30 lbs. the pair. The trackers, who would not keep still, kept urging me to shoot it, with the result that there was a trumpet of alarm, and the herd made off across our front, entering the choung and heading for the open plain we had lately passed over. Telling the trackers to stop where they were, I ran after the elephants, in two minds as to whether to shoot the tusker. Now that they were vanishing, the tusks I had despised a minute or two ago seemed a desirable trophy, although I had secured several larger pairs. The elephants presently slowed down into a fast walk, showing that they were not seriously alarmed. They had probably heard the Burmans, but had neither seen nor winded us. Again I was troubled with compunctions, and as the herd lessened its pace, I decreased mine also. Not so Allah Din. Always impetuous, he was running hard after the elephants, although unarmed, and was now some twenty yards or more ahead of me. Suddenly

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I saw him stop dead, point to the left, and then come running back to me, wildly waving his arms. Thinking he was urging me to follow the herd (for I had stopped running), I said to him as soon as he reached me, 'I am not going after them. He is only a small tusker.' Allah Din was too winded to speak at first, but presently he gasped out, 'It isn't that, but I have just seen an enormous tusker close by on our left.' I was at a loss what to make of this, as we were on an open plain with a few trees growing at intervals, and with no cover even for a deer to hide in, much less an elephant. A patch of thick jungle, however, stretched away to the left, and hid the plain in that direction from view. Allah Din now went on to explain that, just as he had got level with this strip of jungle, he had seen a lot of elephants, as he expressed it, standing out in the open, and that there were several tuskers among them, and, in especial, one huge elephant with magnificent tusks. I followed the orderly somewhat doubtfully, but as soon as we had got level with the strip of jungle above mentioned, such a sight met my eyes as I had never before witnessed. There were about a dozen elephants quietly standing right out in the open, nearly all of them bulls, with several good tuskers among them. One of them towered above his fellows, but I could not see his tusks, as a cow stood alongside hiding the lower portion of his head. Allah Din, however,

assured me that this was the beast whose tusks he had seen, so I proceeded to stalk him without more ado. Luckily I had the wind. At first everything went well, but when within a hundred yards of them I suddenly came almost on top of a wretched little tusker, who was standing, fortunately, with his back to me, under the shade of a large tree. I was in terror that he would discover me; but no, there he stood peacefully dozing in happy unconsciousness of my presence, and allowed me to pass him within ten yards. The remainder of the detachment was on the far side and a little in advance of the big fellow, with the exception of the cow, who was standing close up against him on the near side, both animals being broadside on to me. Bent double, I crept up to them, with Allah Din, as I afterwards found, close on my heels. He must have followed very noiselessly, for I had forgotten all about him in the excitement of the stalk, and only discovered his presence when I had fired. I was now within ten yards of the bull, but his tusks were still hidden behind the cow. Only those who have hunted big game can realise my feelings as I stood within a few paces of one of the finest elephants in Asia, unable to take advantage of a chance which comes to a man once in a lifetime. To fire without getting a glimpse of his ivories was not to be thought of. Allah Din in his hurried glance might very easily

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have mistaken him for another elephant, and I might find after all that I had shot a worthless 'hine' or tuskless male. At the imminent risk of discovery, I edged away to try and get a view of his head behind the cow. At this moment the cow threw up her trunk. I had a fleeting glimpse of a magnificent tusk, which seemed to my excited imagination even bigger than I afterwards found it to be. The next moment her trunk was down again, but I had seen all I wanted to, and crept back again to my former position. I did not dare to try for the earhole, as this would have necessitated getting level with the eye of the cow, who must then have seen me. Slowly I raised the rifle. The silence was intense. I could hear my heart thumping loudly beneath my shirt. The great ears of the bull came forward, exposing the fatal spot behind the ear, but the next second, with a resounding flap, they were back again. Again they flapped to and fro, without giving me a moment in which to take aim. This would never do. It could only be a matter of seconds before I was discovered, and then good-bye to the chance of a lifetime. I determined to fire the instant the ears again went forward, and breathlessly waited for a movement. There they go again. Now or never! Bang! At the shot the bull and cow wheeled round as on a pivot, and rushed off trumpeting loudly. Quick as they were, the rest of the elephants had a start of them.

The herd, or rather the detachment, made straight across the plain for dense jungle, with my bull bringing up the rear. Never shall I forget the disappointment of that moment. I had eyes only for the bull, and dashed off wildly in his wake, with but the faintest hope of overtaking him before he reached the sanctuary of the jungle. But luck was on my side. About 200 yards from where the elephants had been resting was a deep nullah, and into this they disappeared one after the other, reappearing in a few seconds as they climbed the opposite bank. I pulled up dead, and the moment the huge back of the bull came into view as he ascended the steep bank I pressed the trigger. For a few paces he went on as if untouched, and then suddenly collapsed in a sitting position. My bullet had caught him fair in the spine, and had paralysed his hind quarters. I do not think I ever ran faster in my life. In much less time than it takes to tell it, I had scrambled into the nullah and up the opposite bank, and had fired at a distance of a couple of yards into the ear-hole. But the poor beast in his agony kept tossing his head, and rooting up small bushes with his trunk, making it difficult to take a steady aim. My shot had no effect, but a second attempt was successful, and the elephant rolled over dead by the side of a big tree, which held the body up, and prevented it collapsing altogether on its side. My delight can be

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imagined. Allah Din and I, with the perspiration streaming down our faces, pumphandled each other till we were tired. The point of the smaller tusk was firmly imbedded in the ground, and the massive forelegs were doubled up underneath the animal. By dint of twisted creepers, and much hauling on the part of the three Burmans who had now joined us, and ourselves, we at length got one of the forelegs sufficiently out from under the body to measure the foot, and I remember wishing that Sanderson had been there to see the size of it. I imagine it would have altered his views regarding the height to which the Indian elephant occasionally attains.

On our arrival at the village a bullock cart was dispatched to bring in the head, attended by the villagers *en masse*, each man armed with a dah to assist in decapitating the fallen monster, and, incidentally, to cut off as much meat for himself as possible. I sent Allah Din to superintend the operation, with strict injunctions that no meat was to be taken until the head and feet were safely in the cart. The head was sent in in triumph to Budalin next day, as much meat as possible having been removed from the skull, and a deep grave was duly dug for its temporary resting-place, and kept well watered. At the end of a fortnight the skull was dug up, and the tusks—the left and lower ones of the frontispiece—removed by hand. Their measurements are given at the end of this chapter. The feet, after being

thoroughly cleaned out—a difficult and lengthy business—were cured in the jail at Monywa, and, as waste-paper boxes, now make a very imposing addition to my collection of trophies.

I cannot pretend to have felt many qualms of compunction when I have been lucky enough to knock over a big beast. One generally has to work pretty hard for the shot, and at any moment the tables may be turned on the hunter. Moreover, elephants are mischievous brutes : the amount of damage a herd will do to cultivation has to be seen to be realised. I confess I did feel mean when I bowled over my first elephant, a youngster with tusks about 3 ft. long and weighing something like 12 lbs. the pair. But I have never since been guilty of such a crime, and I may, perhaps, be allowed to plead in extenuation that not only was it my first elephant, but that I had only a few hours previously let off this very elephant, or one just like him, because I was unwilling to fire a shot while a chance remained of bagging a finer animal. When, during a stampede, he gave me a second chance, it was too much for poor human nature as exemplified in the person of a beginner. I tried to console myself with the reflection that I had erred in common with Sanderson and other noted nimrods of bygone days, when they first essayed the finest of all sports. But it was a very poor sort of consolation, and I felt heartily ashamed of myself.

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A certain amount of harm is done by native shikaris, and occasionally by subordinates in Government employ ; but these people cannot afford, as a rule, the rifles necessary for the killing of heavy game, so their attentions are generally confined to potting an unwary deer over a water-hole. I remember, however, in Burma once meeting a subordinate in the Public Works Department who informed me that he knew of the whereabouts of a herd of bison, and suggested that I should accompany him and wipe out the lot ! He had already killed a cow and wounded a bull from this very herd, and was extremely pleased with his performance.

In Burma, as in India, elephants are now protected by a special Act, and it is illegal to shoot them except in self-defence, or when actually doing damage to cultivation. But it is not difficult, I believe, to obtain permission to kill one elephant, and in many parts of Upper Burma during the latter part of the rains elephants do so much damage to rice cultivation that permission to go after a particular herd is readily granted by the local authorities. Occasionally, in certain districts where elephants have been doing constant damage, the Elephant Act is treated as a dead letter for the time being, permission being given to all and sundry to drive the elephants from that part of the district which has received too much attention from their frequent visita-

tions. Then, again, elephants may be shot in independent territory, with the sanction of the reigning sawbwa, or prince; but such places are very inaccessible, and require much time to reach, and very complete arrangements, since no villages will be met with, and all provisions, including fowls, eggs and rice, have to be carried. The beginning of the cold weather would be the best time of year in which to make a trip to one of these out-of-the-way places. It would be quite impossible to shoot there in the rains and at the same time avoid malarial fever. Worse still, the sportsman's servants would be knocked over by fever to a certainty, when the shooting trip would perforce come to a speedy termination. The hot weather—March, April, May, and the beginning of June—would be the most favourable time for wandering through the jungles, as the undergrowth would then be low. Tracking, however, owing to the dry state of the ground, would be difficult. Personally, if I intended to make a lengthy trip after elephants in independent territory, I would choose the cold weather, taking my chance of finding the beasts in thick cover. During November the ground would still be damp from the recent rains, while occasional showers might be expected in December and January. However, since in most years elephants are pretty certain to be doing damage to cultivation in Burma proper during the latter part of the

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rains, it would hardly be worth while making a long journey—possibly of several weeks—into independent territory, when permission to shoot one or more close at hand could probably be obtained without difficulty. In the rains elephants wander into the dry zone, finding sufficient cover in the thick scrub which grows in certain tracts, and are often to be found within a few miles of villages, too close to be pleasant to the unfortunate cultivators, whose crops they ravage during the night.

As regards the pursuit of elephants, the writer's experience differs from that of many sportsmen. So far from having to cover huge distances after elephants, he has almost invariably found them easier to locate,¹ and easier to come up with, than any other species of heavy game. Of course, if one particular beast is the object of pursuit, and if tracks are followed which are perhaps two days old, a long, stern chase may be expected. But where elephants are plentiful it is rarely long before fresh traces are found, or the animals themselves are met with. Indeed, the difficulty very often is to avoid them when after bison or tsaing, and elephants are in the neighbourhood. Sooner or later you are bound to run up against them,

¹ Locate here refers to the approximate marking down of animals in a particular jungle or area after tracks have been found, and does not include the journey from village to village in quest of information.

probably spread right across the tracks of the animal you are following. This is always a nuisance. The trackers, who are all right after bison, don't in the least fancy close quarters with a herd of elephants, and the trouble is to get past. Apart from everything else, a Burman is a very child for curiosity, and even if not actually afraid to pass the elephants, he will think nothing of wasting half an hour or more watching the herd feeding at a safe distance, while all the time your bison is getting farther and farther away. By the time you have got past, the tracks of the bison will possibly have been lost, or, what amounts to the same thing, have been trampled over by the elephants, so that they cannot be distinguished.

But *revenons à nos moutons*. Many of my readers will want to know how to set about shooting elephants in Burma. They will want to know the best time of year in which to shoot, and the best districts to go to. Those who are new to the sport may wish to know also how to find the big tusker in a herd, and the best weapon to slay him with. I will endeavour to put myself in the place of a man new both to Burma and to elephants, and to give him such information as my own experience suggests as likely to help him. With regard, then, to weapons, I recommend a D.B. high-velocity 450-400 rifle. I have given my reasons for doing so in the chapter on rifles at the end of

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the book. As to districts, it depends on whether a man has obtained permission to shoot an elephant under any circumstances, or whether he is restricted to a certain animal or herd doing damage to cultivation. The same may be said with regard to the time of year. To the man who has obtained the sanction of the Local Government to kill an elephant, I would say try the districts of the Upper Chindwin, the Ruby Mines, the Arracan Hill Tracts, Shwebo, Mandalay, or Magwe. Anywhere, in fact, where elephants are to be found throughout the year (see the list of districts, with their respective possibilities as regards sport, at the end of the book, together with the map). To obtain sport in the districts above mentioned, the latter end of May and the whole of June would be the best months. The undergrowth is still low, while the ground is soft enough for tracking. A month earlier it is like iron; a month later the undergrowth has sprung up to a height which may vary from four to eight feet or more, while the leaf-shedding trees and bushes have donned a new garb in grateful recognition of the early monsoon showers—all very pretty and artistic, but exceedingly trying to the hunter. Therefore, if shooting outside the dry zone, do not be beguiled into trying for elephants in the cold weather, except in independent territory, when, in view of the long journey entailed, and the constant marching

when you get there, it might be advisable to postpone the trip till the cooler months.

Although in Burma proper the sportsman will probably be limited to one elephant—should he succeed in obtaining sanction to kill one at all, by no means a certainty—he will have plenty of opportunities of shooting bison, tsaing, and other game in the districts mentioned: a further reason for choosing the months of May and June for his shoot. The selection of a particular district will depend on the time at the sportsman's disposal. If his time is practically unlimited, the Arracan Hill Tracts offer a greater variety of game than most other districts, and may give him a rhino. If stationed in a good game district my advice is to shoot in it, and to resist the temptation to go farther afield. The sportsman will naturally obtain more help from the local authorities in his own district than in others where he is a stranger. In Burma, at all events, sportsmen and officials are usually very generous in putting acquaintances, and even strangers, on to the best shooting grounds in their district, and in helping them to get good trackers, transport, &c.; but they consider, very naturally, that they have the first claim to the shooting in their own districts, and they do not view with delight the prospect of being invaded by sportsmen from other parts of Burma. So that, before deciding to shoot in a district other than the one in which

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you may happen to be stationed, it is as well to ascertain the nature of the reception awaiting you. This applies, of course, equally to men coming out from England, and over from India, to shoot in Burma.

But bearing in mind the Kheddah operations in Burma, and the prohibitions of the Elephant Act, I would not advise anyone who is especially keen to hunt elephants to apply to the Local Government for permission to shoot one. This course would only be advisable in the case of those who want to shoot a variety of game—bison, tsaing, thamin, &c.—and who wish to add an elephant to the bag. If elephants are the *raison d'être* of a hunting trip, I would say, time your arrival for September, and confine your attentions to the dry belt. During the latter part of the rains elephants wander into the dry zone to escape the insect pests of the damp regions. As the feeding is very limited in extent, the animals soon find their way to the paddy-fields, and before long reports of damage come in from all quarters. Permission is then given to drive off the elephants, and who so competent to effect this meritorious action as the sportsman, with his modern high-velocity rifle? Off he goes, therefore, armed with a chit from the Deputy Commissioner containing the necessary sanction. But even this precaution, though desirable, is not actually necessary. So long as elephants have really

been doing damage in the district, it will suffice to obtain verbal permission to shoot such animals as are known to be the offenders, always provided that they are still engaged nightly in their felonious practices. The prospective sportsman may ask, 'How am I to know that the herd I am after is the one which is doing the damage?' Well, there is small chance of a mistake in this direction. The sportsman travels from village to village, making inquiries as he goes, until finally he arrives at one close to which the elephants have fed on the paddy-fields the night before. The herd will have made for thick scrub jungle just before daylight, and will be found within a few miles of the village. These are the culprits, and if not driven off they will be certain to pay another visit to the paddy-fields during the night. They take very little notice of the shouts and tom-tomming of the villagers, being well aware that for all their noise they can do no harm. Even shots fired at night only have the effect of driving them off for a few hours, when back they come again.

Perhaps it would be as well to describe in detail the process to be followed by the sportsman from the time he first gets information of elephants doing damage to the happy moment when a big tusker lies dead before him. In the first place, then, 'khubbar' is essential, and the best way to obtain it is to have a friend

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at court in the person either of the Deputy Commissioner, the Assistant Commissioner, the Sub-divisional Officer, or the Deputy Superintendent of Police. If elephants are on the rampage reports will assuredly be brought in, together with applications from the villagers for guns and ammunition. Before the men get back to their villages the elephants will probably have departed to fresh woods and pastures new, and the guns will be utilised for shooting deer. But they will be issued none the less, in view of the likelihood of the elephants returning sooner or later. This is the time for the sportsman to get 'khubbar.' Burmans, like all Orientals, are very dilatory in their movements, and if the sportsman seizes his opportunity he will be able to forestall them, arriving at the scene of action long before they are back in their respective villages. It should be borne in mind that when they do get back, they will not confine themselves to firing from their 'tehs' in the paddy-fields at night, but will march in a body to the jungle where the elephants are resting, and will scare the herd by firing volleys on the outskirts of the cover. The elephants will, of course, retreat, for perhaps twenty miles or more, and though they will return later on, since no real damage has been done, the sportsman's chance for the time being will have vanished with the elephants. It is therefore a great advantage to be first in the field. Guns may

be issued, perhaps, to half a dozen villages, so that one lot, at all events, is pretty certain to have a bang at them, with the result that the elephants will clear out of that part of the district for the time being. Although, as I have said, elephants take little notice of shouts, or even shots, at night, when actually on the paddy-fields, they take quite another view of the matter when followed and fired at during the day.

We will suppose, then, that the sportsman has lost no time in dogging the elephants from village to village, and has at last located them in thick scrub some few miles from the paddy-fields. Now comes the tug-of-war. Long before you see the herd you are informed of its vicinity by the loud trumpeting of the older beasts, and the squeaking of the youngsters, while the deep rumblings of the herd and the crash of branches torn off the trees tells you that the elephants are unsuspicious and still feeding. Your Burmans now begin to point excitedly, and suddenly develop a suspicious politeness, assigning to you a prominent position which you could well dispense with. The noise the huge brutes are making is almost drowned in the beating of your own heart, which is thumping under your shirt in an absurdly noisy and officious manner. Keeping the wind, you now get up to the herd, and presently make out the legs or head of a cow or young tusker,

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which, all unconscious of your presence, is lazily pulling down a branch here and there, and ramming it into its capacious maw. It is now a case of thus far and no farther with your Burmans, who if not already up trees will take to them on the very first note of alarm. In any case, they have no intention of getting closer. After all, they have brought you up to the herd, and that is as much as you can expect from the ordinary villager. You now begin to creep in among the elephants, and will have ample opportunity of recognising the difficulty, not to say danger, of trying to find a big tusker in thick cover with elephants all round you, and invisible until you stumble on a beast only a few yards distant. After getting as far as you can, and failing to discover a big tusker, you sneak out again, and try from another point. It is exciting work, especially if the herd is slowly feeding towards you. The big tuskers are generally in rear of the herd, in a little group all by themselves, with one or two cows. I have, however, on several occasions found them right in the middle of a herd surrounded by females. A herd, if of any size, is seldom united, but is split up into several detachments, each of which must be separately searched for a big tusker. Sooner or later, in trying to avoid a young tusker or a cow, you will, on rounding a bush or bamboo clump, come suddenly almost on top of a cow with

calf. These are nasty customers, and if a man is very close are apt to charge on suspicion. If all goes well, and you have pushed on boldly but quietly, always, of course, paying the greatest attention to the wind, you are pretty certain to come on a big fellow at last, if there is one in the herd. The trouble now is to get up to him. There are probably half a dozen elephants all round him, and it may take a lot of manœuvring to get within a dozen yards or so. You cannot get too close. The closer you are the safer you are, as the herd is less likely to stampede in your direction. Wait till he gives you a fair chance, aim carefully at his head, and look out for a stampede. At the shot there will be a rush, the whole herd will close up and then stampede—in which direction it is impossible to say. If they come straight down on you, your only chance is to stand absolutely motionless behind a bamboo clump or tree, if there is one available; otherwise, in the open. To run is fatal. A stampede by a big herd of elephants in one's direction is a trying ordeal, but it is not as dangerous as it appears if one keeps cool and does not attempt to move. The huge beasts are merely intent on escaping, and will pass by on either hand, mistaking one for a tree. Any movement attracts attention and induces pursuit. If, during a stampede, an elephant is seen coming straight towards you, a shot or a shout will

turn him aside. This is the only time it is permissible to shout at elephants, unless one wishes to provoke a charge. When a herd is suspicious, and stands motionless just before moving off, a shout will probably result in one or more of the animals charging at once.

As a result of your shot one of three things will happen. Your elephant may be knocked over and lie dead as mutton, with a bullet through his brain; or he may merely be stunned, and lie bellowing on the ground; or he may wheel round and make off. To take the last case first. If the ground admits of it, rush after him at once, and try to get alongside for the ear-shot. If you cannot manage this, fire under his tail and look out for squalls! He will probably wheel round and charge on the spot, thus giving you the chance of a forehead shot. This should turn him, if it doesn't drop him. As he turns to continue the retreat, you may have time to give him a shot in the ear. He will not go far now. He has three shots in the head and one in the tail, and is sure to be in an uncommonly bad temper; he will wait for you in the thickest patch of cover he can find, and will charge out at you as soon as he sees or hears you. And so the game goes on until, in one of his charges, your bullet finds the brain, and over rolls the huge beast like a shot rabbit. If your first shot has knocked him over and merely stunned him, his bellowings

will acquaint you with the fact. Lose no time in getting up to him, and giving him his quietus before he finds his legs. An elephant's head is a mass of cellular tissue, and a shot anywhere except in the brain won't bother him much. I need hardly say that if you let him get away you may make up your mind to having seen the last of him. If you have luckily found the brain, further proceedings will cease to interest him, and all that remains to be done is to cut off his tail and walk home in triumph.

Now a word as to the shots to be tried for. It is astonishing what a number of men go after elephants with but a hazy idea of where to put their bullets. Do not be tempted to try body shots, except as a last resource. It is a cruel, and frequently useless, proceeding. An elephant hit well forward in the body will certainly die—in time—but he may go forty miles or more, and the chances are that you will lose him in heavy jungle. With patience you can make pretty certain of getting a good chance at the head, and it is so satisfactory to terminate the hunt with a well-placed bullet in the fatal spot. The shots to be tried for are four in number.

1. The forehead shot.—Aim at the bump just above the base of the trunk when the animal is facing you with head held level. If you are on higher ground than the elephant, aim just above the bump. If below the animal,

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aim just below the bump. The brain, which is small in comparison with the size of the skull, is situated far back, midway between the orifice of the ears. The brain itself is oval, about the size and shape of a small Rugby football.

2. If the elephant is facing three-quarters towards you, a shot aimed at the hollow of the temple, at such an angle as to cut an imaginary rod passing between the earholes, will find the brain.

3. If he is standing with head turned three-quarters from you, and an eye is visible, shoot in the hollow behind the ear, on a level with the earhole, as the animal flaps his ears forward. (N.B.—This is a difficult shot to judge.)

4. If broadside on shoot straight into the earhole. If the elephant is standing at such an angle that neither eye is visible do not shoot.

A charging elephant carries his head high, and a shot aimed at the bump above the trunk would merely glance off, and would certainly not stop a charge. In this case aim at the base of the trunk low down, almost on a level with the mouth. The shot will travel up towards the brain, and if it misses the exact spot, will only do so by a few inches. An elephant's trunk is extremely sensitive, and the combined effect of the blow on the trunk and the passage of the bullet close to the brain will in itself suffice to turn a charge, and possibly to knock the animal over. Should he still come on, a second bullet in

the same place, or even a little lower, will almost invariably turn him, and give you time, possibly, for a shot in the ear as he makes off. A charging elephant coils his trunk in his mouth and so gives a fair chance. I *have* read of elephants charging with trunk thrown up, but am glad to say have never met with such an inconsiderate brute, and do not believe that one elephant in a hundred would be likely to carry his trunk in this position while actually charging. It is dead against the animal's normal habit and instinct. In such a case I should be inclined to shoot straight at the elephant's eye and hope for the best. If unsuccessful, the shot would, at all events, have the effect of bringing down the unruly member to its natural position, and a second bullet aimed at the base of the trunk would probably induce a more reasonable frame of mind. It is indeed fortunate for some of us that a charging elephant is not so tenaciously vindictive as a wounded buffalo, who, when charging, refuses to be stopped except by death alone. If this were so one would have little chance against an elephant charging from a few paces' distance. Escapes, indeed, from a wounded buffalo are only made possible by the fact that under ordinary circumstances the beast charges from some way off, fifty paces or more, giving the hunter time to get in a couple of cool shots, and so rake the animal from stem to stern. When a buffalo lies 'dogo,' and comes out

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unexpectedly at a few paces' distance, the chance of a hurried shot striking the nostril, and so reaching the brain, must be slight indeed, and it is under these circumstances that men get caught through no fault of their own.

One hears occasionally of animals charging at the shot. What happens, I think, generally in these cases is that the beast is momentarily stupefied, fails to locate the sound of the shot, and in its first rush comes in the direction in which it has been facing. This has happened to the writer when shooting both bison and tsaing, but on catching sight of him the animal has immediately swerved and gone on. The result, of course, may be different in the case of a beast suspicious of danger who has seen its enemy, as, for instance, a tiger crouched and watching the man in front of him. Here the animal not only scents danger, but sees before him the person from whom it is to be apprehended. The shot confirms his suspicions, and a charge is just as likely to be the result as not.

It is commonly supposed that the most dangerous form of elephant shooting is the pursuit of a rogue. I do not think that this is the case, and the majority of men who have hunted elephants will probably agree with me. It is true that a rogue will charge on sight, but this very fact is in one's favour, as when doing so he presents a favourable opportunity for the

head shot. I can state from experience that a rogue is just as easily turned as any other elephant; when wounded he behaves as any other elephant will under the circumstances, that is, he goes on and waits in the thickest patch of jungle he can find, and comes out like a gigantic Jack-in-the-box as soon as he sights or hears you. Sooner or later he exposes himself badly, until finally a bullet in the brain rolls him over.

It is a great advantage to have only one beast to deal with. When interviewing a herd the sportsman runs a double danger, possibly before a shot has been fired. The first is that a stampede may occur at any moment in his direction, and the second that, also at any moment, he may unexpectedly stumble on to a cow with a calf. A herd of elephants, unlike a herd of bison or other big game, spreads out and covers a large area, and as the herd is almost invariably in thick jungle, individual elephants are met with very suddenly. It is extremely unpleasant, on making a *détour* to avoid a young tusker or a cow, to come almost face to face with another cow with a butcha beside her. If at such close quarters she finds you out, a charge will probably be the consequence. She is taken by surprise, and her maternal fears induce her to assume the offensive, when if she were alone she would probably sheer off. If merely suspicious, she may take a couple of strides up to the bush or

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clump behind which you are crouching, and at the slightest sound she will be on top of you. More than once the writer has been held up in this uncomfortable predicament, hardly daring to breathe, with a huge brute standing stiff with suspicion almost over him. Fortunately, on these occasions the wind has held, and the elephant, after what has seemed hours but was really only a few seconds, has come to the conclusion that there was something uncanny about that bush, though what it was she didn't quite know, and has sheered off, with her calf at her heels. This constitutes the chief danger of elephant shooting, and it is one which must be expected, if a point is made of thoroughly searching a herd for a big tusker. It is curious, by the way, to note how readily elephants interpret the various sounds and movements made by individual members of a herd. There is no mistaking their attitude when one of their number signals 'man.' There is absolute stillness for a few moments, then a rush as the herd closes up, and off they go with many a shrill scream and trumpet, as they crash through the dense undergrowth as if it were tissue paper. A short, sharp trumpet proclaims that one is discovered. But if the sportsman happens to be very close to an elephant in a herd, and the beast is alarmed, it will quietly move off with hardly a sound, and, in spite of this, the whole herd will know as if by magic what is taking

place and will silently follow suit. Similarly, in stalking single elephants, when the animal sights or hears a man at close quarters, there is a quick rush, followed by absolute silence. The novice creeps cautiously in the elephant's wake, supposing it to be standing close at hand listening. Not a bit of it ! That elephant is quietly making tracks for all it is worth, and has no intention of pulling up until it has placed many a mile between itself and its pursuer.

I shall not easily forget my first interview with a herd of wild elephants, and how disappointed I was at what I then thought was the mysterious behaviour of the herd. I was after bison at the time, at the foot of the Chin Hills, and had never seen or heard wild elephants. I had an old tracker with me who proved to be quite useless. It was a regular case of the blind leading the blind. We were making our way one evening across an open plain bordered by thick jungle, when suddenly an unearthly scream rent the air. I looked at the Burman, who returned the compliment, evidently as fogged as I was myself. 'What is it ?' I whispered. 'Pyoung' (bison), he said. The sound was presently repeated, and seemed to come from a corner of the thick jungle ahead of us. Somehow I didn't think it could be bison. I had an idea that bison lowed or bellowed like domestic cattle; but I supposed he knew. The idea of elephants never occurred to me. Well, we skirted the

jungle, and presently approached the spot from which the weird sounds had proceeded. As we were moving along I heard the squelching of muddy water just inside the cover, as if some large animal were having a bath. Cautiously I peered into the thick bush, and caught sight of the hind quarters of an elephant rolling from side to side. The brute was enjoying a mud bath. The Burman got a glimpse of it at the same moment, and calling out 'Sin la dé! sin la dé!' ('Elephant, elephant, it is coming!') took to his heels, and was half way across the plain before one could say Jack Robinson. At the same time there was a noise as of huge corks being drawn from invisible bottles, and I got a momentary glimpse of the retreating hind quarters of the elephant. I heard a slight brushing of the jungle about fifty yards away to my left, and a similar sound on my right. This was succeeded by absolute silence. I now realised that we had surprised a herd of elephants. After waiting for a few moments in the expectation of hearing further sounds, I cautiously crept along in the wake of the beast we had surprised, expecting to find it standing waiting for me a few yards farther on. The jungle was abominably thick, being of the wild-rose persuasion, and as I crept along the narrow elephant track, stumbling over creepers every now and then, and being held up by 'wait-a-bit' thorns every few yards, I found

myself thinking what a horrible place it was to be caught in if the beast charged. Needless to say, the great, muddy footprints were all I saw of that elephant, and after following them for about half a mile, I gave it up in disgust, and regained the plain, there to find my tracker looking rather ashamed of himself. He told me he had once been caught by elephants, and that was the reason he was so afraid of them—a palpable fairy tale, since anyone who had once got close enough to elephants to be chased by them would certainly have recognised their trumpet. It is, perhaps, hardly necessary to add that I got no bison with this man either; in fact, I doubt whether he had ever before either seen or heard wild elephants or bison. The quiet disappearance of the herd was a revelation to me, and one by which I have since profited.

Elephants getting the scent of a human being invariably announce the fact by a sharp scream, which is instantly followed by a rush, as the animal or the herd makes off. All animals appear to fear the scent of man much more than the sight of him. One may sometimes get up to a beast after it has heard the approach, or even caught a glimpse, of its pursuer, and has bolted. But let the breeze bring but a whiff of the dreaded taint to the sensitive nostrils, and the animal is off for good.

Tracking elephants is often difficult work.

One would suppose that the great feet would leave an unmistakable imprint, and so they do in sand and on damp soil. But when the tracks lead over dried leaves and stony soil, the spongy feet form practically no impress, unless there has been recent rain. A displaced leaf, an inch or so of upturned soil, a broken branch, are often the only signs to guide your trackers, who, unless they are really good men, will be certain to lose the tracks before very long. I shall have more to say about trackers in another chapter, but I may remark *en passant* that few things are more annoying than to follow tracks for several hours, and eventually have to give them up. A Burman objects more than most Orientals to saying that he cannot do what is required of him. He therefore very often sets out gaily to track, knowing in his heart of hearts that as soon as the tracking becomes difficult he will be unable to follow. At first everything goes well. The tracks lead, we will say, across a sandy nullah and enter bamboo jungle, where they keep round a hill. The soil is loose and heavy, and the elephants' feet have sunk in at every step. After a while a ridge is reached, and here difficulties begin. The tracks cease to become patent to the eye, and check follows check in rapid succession. Other tracks cross and recross those which you are following, and your Burmans keep up a flow of discussion as they peer about,

trying to hit off the original tracks. 'That's old.' 'No, I think it's new.' 'It's yesterday's tracks.' 'It's last night's,' and so forth. This goes on for some hours, during which you have, perhaps, covered three miles of country. Presently, seeing that matters look pretty hopeless, you say, 'Can't you find the tracks?' And you are then told, 'No, we can't follow them—they have got mixed up with others—many elephants have gone this way,' and back you trudge to camp, anathematising under your breath the Burman and his annoying little ways. This sort of thing will happen over and over again with indifferent trackers under circumstances in which a good tracker would have little difficulty in picking out the tracks. Of course, in really hard, dry weather the best trackers can do little; but such men will follow tracks over all kinds of soil as long as the ground is sufficiently damp to leave the faintest possible impression of the animal's footprints. Such trackers are rare, in Burma at all events, and in most cases the sportsman will have to rely on the local moksoh or shikari, who is often merely a coolie, and has probably never seen big game at close quarters. It is, however, consoling to know that nearly every Burman in the remoter villages can track after a fashion, that is to say, infinitely better than most Europeans. Given heavy rain overnight, your village tracker will certainly bring

you up to elephants or bison; but let two or three days of dry weather succeed the rain, and unless he is an experienced tracker, he is safe to lose the trail before very long. It follows, therefore, that in Burma a man must possess both patience and time to wait for the opportunity, and to seize it when it offers. Even in the rains a break of ten days is not unknown, and if, after the first three or four days of that break, the sportsman attempts to track without first-class trackers, he will have his trouble for nothing.

When following single elephants I have always found that as soon as overnight tracks were found, one came up with the animal within four or five hours at most. In this respect I may, perhaps, have been fortunate; but it has happened so frequently that there must be some other explanation, and I think it is this. Elephants are very deliberate sort of creatures—very unsuspicious, though quick to take alarm when danger threatens. Both bison and tsaing are shy beasts, avoiding man's proximity as much as may be. But the elephant doesn't concern himself particularly. I suppose his great bulk gives him a feeling of security; at all events, he takes his ease when and where he will like a gentleman. After his midday siesta he begins to feed at about 3 P.M., and wanders along as he goes, taking his time about it, till 11 P.M., or thereabouts, when he rests for four

or five hours, during which time he may lie down. At 3 A.M. or so he again begins to feed, moving slowly along, stopping for hours, maybe, in some place where the bamboo fodder particularly tempts him. As soon as the sun gets up he moves into thicker jungle, and from about 9 A.M. to 3 P.M. stops feeding, and quietly dozes the hours away. Let us suppose that one strikes tracks at 6 A.M. which the animal has made at 8 P.M. the previous night. The tracks themselves show us how leisurely have been his movements. They zigzag here and there as the beast has turned aside to pull down a branch or to rub himself against a tree. A little farther on he has, perhaps, stopped for half an hour to make a hearty meal. In the three hours during which he has been walking and feeding he has, perhaps, covered three miles. So that if you have been moving at two miles an hour you will arrive by 7.30 A.M. at the place where he has stopped to rest for the night. He is now some four hours ahead of you, but during those four hours he has moved very leisurely, making long halts here and there, perhaps covering another four or five miles in all, so that, tracking slowly but steadily, you come up with him at 9 A.M., or thereabouts, to find him still feeding if you are lucky.

I can only call to mind two occasions on which I have had a really long trudge after

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elephants. Once when I followed a herd which had got our wind. This herd went for about fifteen miles before again halting in thickish cover. I had started some hours before dawn, and had found the elephants at about 7 A.M., or a little after. The day was cloudy, with a changing breeze, and the herd went off in double-quick time just as I was worming my way up to a tusker. It was evening before I came up with them again, to find them busily feeding. I got my tusker after some trouble, arriving in camp during the small hours of the morning, dead-beat but triumphant. The other time was when following a rogue which I had wounded in the head a month before. Here again the animal was alarmed. We had struck the fresh tracks of a herd which, however, had been doing no damage. I explained to my trackers, one of whom was the headman of the village, that I was not at liberty to follow the herd, and that if I couldn't find the rogue's tracks I would return to the village. I was accompanied at the moment by a nondescript collection of villagers who had come out to meet me armed with 'dahs' to cut up the meat, as somehow they were under the impression that I had already killed an elephant. They were disappointed that I would not follow the herd whose tracks we had just found, but seeing that I was in earnest, they spread themselves out to look for

traces of the rogue. Presently they came racing back in a great state of excitement, to say that they had almost tumbled on top of an elephant sleeping in some thick scrub a few yards off. I could hardly credit this at first, but on going to the spot there were the footprints of a huge elephant, which had been lying down fast asleep within twenty yards of us. The tracks were at once recognised as those of the rogue, and having, with great difficulty, got rid of my following, I started with my two trackers and my orderly to follow the trail. It was now about 10 A.M., and at 1 P.M. I halted for a couple of hours, so as to come up with the beast in the evening, when I hoped it would be feeding. We got up to him at 4 P.M., and the first indication I had of his whereabouts was a short rush in a patch of thick scrub in front of me. I was afraid I had again alarmed the beast, and that he would go for miles, but he quickly dispelled my doubts. Both trackers had taken to trees, and I saw neither of them again until the elephant was killed half an hour later. I had entered the patch closely followed by the orderly, and had covered, perhaps, two hundred yards when, with a fiendish scream, the rogue charged out at us from some dense cover on my right. For some seconds I could distinguish nothing but the bending foliage as the huge brute tore his way through the thick cover, but

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presently he burst out, trunk tightly coiled, ears cocked, and head held high. I waited till his head was clear, and gave him the right barrel at about fifteen yards. I was using a 10-bore Paradox by Holland with a steel-cored bullet, and aimed low down at the base of the trunk about two feet below the bump. The smoke hung round me like a pall, but, stooping below, I saw to my dismay that he was not even checked. I had just time to step aside, so as to clear the smoke, and to give him the left barrel in the same place. This was enough for him, and brought him up when he was all but on me. He slid for some little distance with the impetus of his charge, as he rammed his great forefeet out in front of him to check himself. The next second he had wheeled round and crashed back into the jungle, but I had just time to jerk open the breech, slip in another cartridge, and give him one in the ear before he vanished. It was a very close thing. I suppose he was not five yards from me when he received the second bullet. After waiting a few moments to compose our nerves, I explained matters to the orderly, Allah Din, who was then new to the game but full of pluck. I knew the elephant would not go far, but would wait for us in the nastiest bit of jungle he could find. If I led, tracking, there was every chance of the elephant taking us unawares, and getting

a bit of his own back and something over. I told Allah Din that if he would do the tracking I would follow at his heels, keeping a sharp look-out. He was quite game, in fact, too much so, as he wanted to run after the elephant. He was an impetuous chap, and later was caught by an elephant when out with me, as already narrated, and nearly killed, owing to suddenly losing his head during a stampede, and trying to run. On the present occasion he would go too fast, and I had to be constantly whispering to him to take his time. After going some three hundred yards or so he stopped suddenly and held up his hand. We had just got out of an abominably thick bit of stuff and were about to enter another. Listening intently, I could now hear the elephant ahead of us kicking up clods of earth, a sure sign that he was badly wounded and bent on mischief. At this moment, inadvertently, I trod on a dry twig, which snapped with a slight crackle. There was a shrill scream from the elephant, and out he came. The orderly dodged aside, caught his foot in a creeper, and lay sprawling directly in front of the charging elephant. Lucky for us it was that we were almost in the open. As the beast emerged from the dense cover I gave him a bullet in about the same spot as before, viz. the base of the trunk low down. He rolled over to the shot like a rabbit, and as the smoke cleared

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I saw his huge carcass lying motionless on its side in front of me. The bullet had found its billet this time, and the elephant had died instantaneously. He measured 9 ft. 7 in. at the shoulder and had only one tusk; that, however, was a beauty, and weighed close on 40 lbs. The other tusk had been broken off at the root, probably in a fight with another tusker. I took a huge bunch of maggots the size of a football out of the broken tusk; the poor beast must have endured agonies from tooth-ache. No wonder he had turned rogue! This particular elephant had done a lot of damage for years, and was said to have killed several villagers. He used to hold up a certain position of a cart-road, and give chase to all and sundry passing thereon. Shortly before he was shot he had chased a Burman who was quietly riding along this road. The pony wanted no urging, and while galloping along with the elephant in close pursuit, the Burman had the presence of mind to snatch off his 'gaung baung'—the silk fillet Burmans wear round their heads in lieu of a turban. He threw this down, and the elephant stopped to tear it into shreds, while the man made good his escape. From first to last I do not think this elephant covered more than eight miles from the time we had startled him when asleep; but had he been other than a rogue he would doubtless have gone considerably farther before pulling up.

While on the subject of rogues, I believe that in nearly every instance the animal will be found to be suffering from some physical hurt which occasions constant pain, and so turns an inoffensive beast into a savage man-hunter. It may be a broken tusk, as in this case, or old bullet-wounds which have left festering sores. Sanderson's rogue was found to have had his tail bitten off at the root. Maggots swarmed at the stump, and must have caused the poor beast intense suffering. And then, think of the indignity of it! Who wouldn't be soured by such an outrage! It reminds one of the story of the German student who, having his nose cut off in a duel, stooped to recover the precious organ in order to clap it on again before it got cold. But before he could execute his design, his unfeeling adversary had put his foot on it and squashed it into a pulp! If the injured man thereafter went about with murder in his heart who could blame him?

Female elephants are often addicted to the practice of biting off each other's tails—a piece of spite that apparently isn't always confined to the feminine sex. Tuskers as a rule, however, are above this sort of thing, and possibly Sanderson's poor rogue suffered from the jealousy of a discarded flame. I once heard a tusker fight taking place in very thick jungle on the outskirts of a herd. But in trying to get up to

them I alarmed the herd, which decamped, together with the combatants. The scene of the fight, however, left no doubt as to the fierceness of the struggle. The ground was ploughed up in all directions, saplings and branches were strewn everywhere, while here and there clots of blood showed that more than one thrust had penetrated the thick hides of the antagonists. I was sorry to have missed what would have been a unique sight; but, considering the denseness of the jungle and the excited state of the combatants, it was, perhaps, just as well for me that I failed to obtain an interview. As it was, I only got to the place by crawling on my hands and knees, the intertwining creepers and low-hanging branches preventing a more comfortable attitude.

The exact time of year during which elephants breed is uncertain; but as the young are generally dropped in the late autumn, and the period of gestation lasts about twenty months, it is probable that the breeding season is during the hot weather and commencement of the rains. I once caught a young elephant early in November. I had come unexpectedly on elephants in long kaing grass, and the herd had stampeded without giving me a chance. While debating whether to follow them up, I was surprised to hear an elephant roaring a little way off. I made my way to the spot with

cocked rifle, expecting to find a tusker on the rampage; but there stood a baby elephant about 3 ft. high, bellowing out his grievance like a wounded bull. His unfeeling mamma had decamped leaving her offspring behind. We sneaked up behind him, and while my orderly clutched his tail, I threw myself on him and clasped him round the neck. But the little brute managed to drag us for a hundred yards or so before we could pull him up. Finally we got the orderly's 'puggri' round his throat, and frog-marched him into camp. For half the way he fought like an obstreperous pig, making side rushes every now and then into the jungle, and squealing without cessation. But presently he seemed to realise that he had to go, and so might just as well go quietly, and thereafter we had no further trouble. He jogged quietly along in front of the orderly, who drove him as one would a pony. In two days he became absolutely tame, and would rush for his milk whenever he caught sight of me. He was a grand little bull, and I had great hopes of rearing him; but alas! there was nothing better than condensed milk to feed him on, and in spite of every care he died on about the tenth day. I don't suppose he could have been more than a month old. He nearly ruined me in condensed milk, for he used to polish off about four or five tins a day. Young

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elephants are always very delicate, and it is believed to be impossible to rear them by hand. Female elephants are very solicitous for their young when with them ; but, judging from this instance and others I have heard of, if anything happens to separate the mother from the young one, the former, unlike most animals, will not return to look after it.

At the first note of alarm all the babies in a herd disappear as if by magic. They have all got under their mothers' tummies. A young calf can cover ten or fifteen miles without undue fatigue, helped over bad places by its mother. The trunk of a baby elephant is an inert, wabby piece of flesh about a foot in length, and quite useless for drinking purposes. The young suck the cows with the mouth in common with the young of all animals. The cows have their teats, two in number, in front, between their forelegs. They give birth to one calf at a time, twins being rarely heard of. An old cow is invariably the leader of the herd, and when alarmed the tuskers take a line of their own. When travelling, elephants move in single file, the tuskers generally bringing up the rear. Elephants have very poor sight; but when resting during the day and not feeding, their hearing is often acute. When feeding they make so much noise that they can be approached without difficulty. The sense of

smell is highly developed, more so than in most animals.

It is often difficult to know what to do when a herd is found just after they have stopped feeding. When it can be managed, it is best to wait till the evening, when they will wander into thinner jungle and commence to feed. But in the rains the weather cannot always be relied on; the wind may veer round, and the herd depart as silently as shadows. When the herd is at rest, the risk of alarming it before finding a big tusker is greatly increased, so that whenever possible it is wise to wait till they have begun to feed again.

As a last word, let me caution beginners against attempting to follow elephants into really dense jungle or high kaing grass. No good can possibly result. It is like pursuing them in the dark. The elephants themselves in such places can only follow elephant paths, and if anything should occur to turn the herd, they will stampede back on their tracks, a practice they are rather given to. There is then no hope for the hunter, shoot he never so straightly. He may turn the foremost elephants, but he will be overrun by those pressing on in rear. I have tried it myself; but it is a foolish game, and one which will sooner or later bring certain disaster in its train. Nearly all accidents that occur when after

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elephants are caused by the sportsman foolishly following a herd or a wounded elephant into cover so thick that he can move neither to right nor left in the event of a charge, and cannot see more than a yard or two in front of him. It will be found that in hunting elephants quite sufficient risks are run in the ordinary course of the business, without going out of the way to look for trouble.

The lower tusk and the one on the left in the frontispiece are a pair. The measurements are as follows :

Lower Tusk.—Length, 6 ft. $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. ; girth, $16\frac{1}{4}$ in. ; weight, $57\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.

Left Tusk.—Length, 4 ft. $6\frac{1}{2}$ in. ; girth, $16\frac{1}{2}$ in. ; weight, 42 lbs.

Total weight of pair, $99\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.

The Right Tusk is that of a rogue—a single tusker.

Measurements.—Length, 4 ft. $8\frac{1}{2}$ in. ; girth, $16\frac{1}{4}$ in. ; weight, $38\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.





GAUR OR BISON

(Bos Gaurus)

CHAPTER II

THE GAUR (BOS GAURUS, OR GAVÆUS GAURUS) (*Burmese, 'Pyoung'*)

THE gaur, or bison, as he is usually called, is a very fine fellow indeed, and an old bull furnishes one of the handsomest trophies a sportsman can desire. In colour an old bull is almost jet black, with yellow stockings. The forehead is ash coloured, the eye pale blue, and the body almost hairless. He differs from the true bison in having thirteen pairs of ribs, the bison proper having fourteen. Young bulls and cows are dark chocolate in colour, with white stockings. In the shade of the jungle old cows often look quite black, and not unfrequently are mistaken for bulls, and pay the penalty accordingly. The forehead is concave in shape, the nasal bones rising from it in an arch which appears to increase with age. The effect is to give an old bull the appearance of having a Roman nose. This is very noticeable when looking at the beast in profile. The head is huge, but so proportioned to the

body that it does not appear clumsy on the living animal. The bison has a high dorsal ridge, and this, taken together with a deep body and massive limbs, gives the animal an appearance of strength and vigour which his habits do not belie. He appears to fall away somewhat behind, it is true, owing to the dorsal ridge ending abruptly halfway along the back; but his quarters are massive, with no suggestion of weakness about them. A big bull stands 6 ft. at the withers, and occasionally a few inches higher. There is something very impressive about an old bull bison. In his way he is as massive as an elephant is in his. Looking at his enormous girth and huge limbs, it is difficult to realise what an active beast a bison really is. Weight for weight I don't suppose he is heavier than a bull buffalo, but he certainly strikes one as being a far nobler animal. His horns are often disappointing. They are frequently short in proportion to the huge skull. Length, however, is not so important as girth. This is the true test of a good head. In some books the average horn measurement is put down at 2 ft. 7 in., but this, I think, is well above the average. I should call 27 in. a good average head, with a girth of 18 in., or over. Anything over 30 in. in length is a very fine head. The horns of an old bull are always well corrugated at the base, the indentations

being so deep that one can often put one's finger between them. This corrugation, or ridging, of the horn extends from the skull to a distance of from 6 in. to 1 ft. along the horn. Thence onward the horn is smooth, the tips being frequently chipped from fighting, and butting down saplings. The ears of an old bull are invariably torn from fighting. The horns themselves are very handsome, being flat towards the base, and curving outwards, the tips turning inwards and slightly backwards. In colour they are a greenish yellow, the tips being black. In young bulls the horns, besides being shorter, are far less massive, seldom taping more than 15 in. in girth, while they lack the indentations which constitute the chief beauty of a bison's head. Consequently, no one cares to shoot a young bull, even though fully grown, as his head is only fit to throw away. Bison *have* been shot with horns measuring close on 40 in., but one may shoot fifty bison before finding a head with horns approaching this length. Cows have wretched little horns, about 20 in. in length, with no girth to speak of. It is supposed that solitary bulls always possess the finest heads, but this is undoubtedly not always the case. I have a theory with regard to this which I will take leave to air presently.

Except when breeding, bison are very peaceable animals, and one may see bulls of all

sizes and ages together with cows feeding in perfect amity. As a rule, herds do not mix; but on one occasion the writer saw over a hundred bison on a plain or 'Quin,' near Homalin on the Upper Chindwin, feeding greedily on the young grass. They were all together, heading in one direction as they fed along. This could not possibly have been one herd, which ordinarily numbers from ten to twenty animals. I imagine that several herds, tempted by the succulent grass, had met and joined in one huge body for the time being, doubtless to separate again on returning to the hills. This plain used to be, and still may be, a sure find for bison in May. After feeding for many months on the rank herbage of the hills, it can be imagined how eagerly they rioted on the young, sweet grass sprouting up after the annual fires. Nothing would keep them away. If a herd were fired at one day, another herd would be found close by the next. Indeed, one fortunate sportsman secured two heads the same evening on this plain. I never had the luck to do this; but on three successive evenings I bagged three bulls—two from small herds and the last from the huge conclave of bison already alluded to. I then left them in peace; but doubtless, had I again visited the plain after two or three days, bison would have been found there. This plain extended for a good many

miles, and it is possible that bison on one portion of it could not always hear a shot fired at a distance; but frequently they must have heard the shot, and in spite of it could not resist leaving the jungle for the luscious grass sprouting in the open. It is as well to remember, however, that, normally, a shot fired at a deer or other animal when tracking bison will send the beast you are after off for miles, even though at the time of firing he was a mile or more away. They seem to be able to differentiate at once between thunder and the report of a rifle, and to draw conclusions accordingly.

There is no animal which avoids man's proximity more than the bison. Although he is not to be compared with the tsaing (*Bos Banting*) for wariness, he likes to put as big a distance as he can between himself and human habitations. Tsaing are often found within a few miles of a village, but bison never, unless a solitary animal has inadvertently wandered closer than he meant to. I think I am correct in saying that I have never found herd bison closer than ten miles to a village. As a rule they keep to the hills, and it is generally necessary, or at all events advisable, to take tents and strike into the hills after them. The way bison can gallop up and down steep hills is wonderful, considering the bulk of the animal. Not less wonderful is the manner in which the huge

beast can creep through low arches formed by intertwining creepers and bamboos ; but in this respect a tsaing can give points to any bison.

As with all big game, it is advisable to make an early start when going after bison. Sanderson advises one to wait till the dawn has given place to day in order to avoid fever, and I will admit that early rising, in the rains especially, when the atmosphere is heavy as lead, and there is not a breath of air to relieve the oppressive feeling of damp heat, is very trying. You are soaked to the skin with perspiration before going half a mile, vitality is at its lowest, and as you trudge along you wonder why on earth you were so foolish as to leave a comfortable bed and tent at such an ungodly hour. But presently day breaks, a slight breeze springs up with the dawn, and when you reach your ground at 6 A.M., or thereabouts, matters assume a more cheerful aspect ; and then, when you have the luck to strike the fresh track of a solitary bull between six and seven o'clock, how you congratulate yourself that, 'idle-slumber scorning,' you forced yourself to tumble out of bed at the awful hour of 4 A.M., or even, it may be, earlier ! Alas ! too often virtue is its own reward in big-game shooting as in other things. Still and for all, as they say in Ireland, sooner or later a more substantial reward in the shape of a fine old bull consoles you for all your trouble.

Early rising may not be absolutely essential to success, but it is quite certain that the man who leaves camp at 6 A.M., or later, labours under a great disadvantage. Bison and tsaing start feeding at about 3 A.M. Unlike elephants, they do not stop long in any one place, but feed as they move along. As the sun grows hot they get into thick cover, and finally lie down till the evening. The hour at which they settle down for the day depends on the time of year. In the cold weather they may be found feeding up to 11 A.M., or even later. In the hot season—March, April, May, and the beginning of June—they will lie down for the day by 9 A.M., or possibly earlier. In the rains about 10.30, though this may vary according to the state of the weather. Now, the man who is on his ground by 6 A.M. has a good chance of striking fresh or overnight tracks before 7 A.M., in which case he ought, with any luck and decent trackers, to get up to the beast while it is still feeding or, more likely, moving about in the cover it has selected to lie up in. He will then either hear the bison or spot it before it sees him. Under these circumstances he may look upon the animal as bagged; for it will be his own fault if he fails to secure it. The late riser, on the other hand, does not reach his ground till 8 A.M., and even if he finds fresh tracks at once, has small chance of coming up with the beast

before it is lying up. This means that he will either blunder on to it, and put it up without getting a shot, or else that he will have to wait till the evening, with no certainty when he resumes the trail as to the animal's whereabouts. It may still be resting, or it may have gone several miles. If he gets a shot under the circumstances he may consider himself lucky.

Bison shooting may be divided into three phases. First, there is the walk or ride to the ground. Then comes the hunting for tracks. Some men profess to enjoy this. To the writer it always seems the dreariest part of the whole game. There is nothing particularly enlivening about trudging up and down hill, wet from knee to waist from the dripping undergrowth, and from the waist upwards from perspiration. And as the hours go by your hopes sink lower and lower as the chances in your favour visibly decline. Finally, there is the following of tracks when found. This is most interesting when your trackers are good and circumstances are in your favour; that is, when the ground is sufficiently soft for straightforward tracking and the hour is early. But with bad trackers it is a most disheartening business, and after several lengthy checks and much 'scratching about,' it is advisable to close the proceedings and march home. Some men make a point of wandering all day in the jungle searching for

tracks. I have frequently tried this game, and have never yet found it to pay. Nature will have her due, and if you rise early and work hard up to 11 A.M., or a little later, you are tired out, and unfitted for a further trudge of several hours under a hot sun, with the practical certainty of a long trek when the looked-for tracks are at last discovered, if they ever are. You may halt for possibly an hour, and will rise refreshed; but your tired limbs, and feet especially, require a longer rest, and uncompromisingly announce the fact. Your trackers, too, are tired and dispirited, and are simply longing for the order for 'Home, sweet home.' It is quite a different story when you are on fresh tracks, with every prospect of coming up with the animal before dark. Excitement, or rather expectation, keeps you going, and fatigue is not felt. However, everyone to his taste, or there would be no choice in fancy waistcoats. Personally, if by 11 A.M. I have not succeeded in finding either fresh tracks or those of the previous day, I turn my face campwards.

As regards the best time of year to hunt bison and tsaing, I think there can be no two opinions. The latter end of May and the whole of June is, I conceive, *the* time of year. The undergrowth has not had time to grow to any great height, while the first showers of the monsoon keep the ground soft for tracking. Some

men believe in the months of August and September, when the bamboo shoots are sprouting. Bison and tsaing feed eagerly on these, and occasionally give themselves away by the loud noise caused by the snapping of the shoots as the animals break them off. But one has to fight against constant rain, which frequently washes out the tracks; the undergrowth has grown up to the height of a man and higher; and when you do get up to your beast he is often alarmed before you can get close enough to view him. Also—a minor detail, perhaps, but one which counts—malarial fever is pretty sure to attack you; not severely, maybe, but sufficiently to take the stuffing out of you for the time being. Rheumatism, too, will possibly make its appearance; in fact, Nature will do her little best to bring home to the European the inadvisability—to use no stronger term—of tramping the jungle in the height of the monsoon. Fond, too, as are both bison and tsaing of these same bamboo shoots, it may be many days before the welcome sound of their demolition is heard. I remember once getting up to a bison in August, and actually being within half a dozen yards of him before I could make him out. I managed to bag him only because he was a bison. A tsaing would have given me the slip long before. On the whole, I would advise no one to make a trip after bison or

tsaing during the latter half of July, August and September, though those who happen to be in the jungle during these months, or part of them, might with advantage take an occasional day off after the big game.

Sanderson's advice as to leaving herd bison alone is, I think, sound ; not because the herd bull will necessarily have a poor head, but because the beasts will almost invariably be found in bamboo jungle or other cover, which gives little opportunity of judging the size of the bull's horns, or even of finding the bull at all. And while peering about for the bull, the probability is that one alarms a wretched cow, who dashes off with a snort, taking the herd with her. Therefore, if bison are at all plentiful, it is better to leave herd tracks alone, and to go for those of a solitary animal. If, however, it is late, and no tracks of a solitary bull are found, it might be worth while to follow a herd.

It will be found, on shooting solitary bulls, that frequently the trophy will be a poor one. Of course, there is a great deal of luck about it. One may shoot half a dozen solitary bulls and every head may be a splendid trophy. On the other hand, four out of the six may be heads one would not care to hang up. The first three solitary bulls which fell to the writer had all poor heads, though the animals were fully grown. In the mean time he had obtained two

very fine trophies from herd bulls. Now, there must be a reason for this, and I think the following theory—only a theory, please remember, dear reader—accounts for it. It is not in the nature of things to suppose that a magnificent bull in his prime, with huge, massive horns, can be ignominiously driven from a herd. No, he gets ousted when a youngster by the lord of the herd. Thereafter he goes on his own, and in the course of years, when he feels his strength, he may rejoin the herd—or join another, for the time being. He, in his turn, may be instrumental in turning out one or more youngsters to a solitary existence, and perhaps has a ding-dong battle with the erstwhile leader of the herd, and ousts *him*. When the breeding season, so far as he is concerned, is over, he resumes his solitary life, having got to like it, and no doubt there are some old solitary bulls which have become regular hermits, forswearing female society for ever and a day, possibly because old age creeping on warns them that they are best out of the struggle for supremacy. I think, then, that the young bulls occasionally met with leading a solitary existence have been ousted from herds comparatively lately, and are merely biding their time until they are strong enough to do battle again; while the old fellows with magnificent heads are either hermits who, with declining years, have accepted a solitary life as

their portion, or animals in their prime who merely join a herd for the time being and wander off again when their desires are satisfied. How else can *recent* fighting scars in the body of a solitary bull be accounted for? And why is it that a very old solitary bull, though he may be covered with *old* scars, and his ears may be torn to ribbons from fights in bygone days, does not possess the signs of a recent scar anywhere about him, except such as may be caused by forcing his way through thick jungle? It must be remembered that when animals fight, it is generally for the possession of the attractive female. Doubtless, an old bull, past his prime, who has led a solitary existence for years, joining a herd whenever prompted by nature to do so, continues to consort with a herd from time to time, until realisation of his declining strength is forced upon him by one or two defeats inflicted by animals still in their fullest bodily vigour. These old fellows, in the writer's humble opinion, are the only genuine hermits of the tribe, and he rejects as untenable the theory that every so-called solitary bull leads a solitary existence throughout the year, any more than does a solitary elephant or stag, until the weight of years has begun to tell. It is simply a further instance of the survival of the fittest. The best bull—by no means necessarily the younger animal—wins, and the other has a solitary

existence forced on him, for the time being at any rate.

At the risk of multiplying examples I would ask those of my readers who doubt my theory to explain how it is that when following the trail of a solitary bull, perhaps for some miles, it is occasionally found to cross the fresh tracks of a herd, and thereafter to follow and mingle with them, and how it is that when this happens it is rarely that the bull can be come up with. It is simply that the bull has scented the tracks of the cows, who keep on the trot throughout the day to escape the pertinacious attention either of the herd bull or, possibly, of the animal whose trail the sportsman is following. In either case the result is the same. The herd keeps constantly on the move, closely followed by the bull, which the hunter is unable to overtake in consequence. Burmese hunters, who are often very close observers of animal life, certainly believe firmly that single animals consort with herds from time to time. One other instance bearing on this theory, and I have done. I once shot a young bull which had attached himself to a herd of tame mithun cattle. Now, why? Had he been a bull in his prime, with a fine head, it would be difficult to account for his extraordinary predilection; for there were plenty of bison in the neighbourhood. But the age of the animal—he was not more than five or six years

old—gives a clue, I think, to his rather weird behaviour. I take it that having designs on the harem of his herd leader, the latter gave him a tremendous thrashing (his body was scarred with barely healed wounds) and drove him from the herd. Finding himself during one of his rambles close to this herd of mithun, he consorted with them *faute de mieux*, knowing full well that he could knock any mithun bull who tried to object into a cocked hat. It was rather exciting at the time. There was no tracking, or anything of the sort. The headman of the village mentioned quite casually that for some days past a huge bison, as he described it, had been seen going about with the herd of village mithun. One of the cows, he said, had a clapper round her neck, and if we could only locate the herd by the sound of the clapper, the bison would certainly be found with them. I set off at once, accompanied by a fellow-sportsman and two of the villagers, who were to take us to the herd. We had previously tossed for the shot, the luck falling to me. We tried in one direction, but after going a mile or so with no signs of the herd made for a small stream about two miles from the village, on the banks of which there was a large strip of kaing grass. The villagers said the herd would probably be found in this. Just as we got to the stream we heard the clapper going, and presently out walked the herd of

mithun and waded into the stream. There was no sign of the bison, however, and I had just turned round to tell the villagers what I thought of them, when he suddenly appeared out of the kaing grass, and trotted down the stream in a mighty hurry to join the mithun. Young bull as he was, he looked gigantic beside them. I fired as he passed me, at about forty yards, the bullet catching him obliquely in the quarters and raking him. We found it afterwards imbedded in his lungs. The bull turned off at right angles and galloped up the bank, and we found him lying down a few hundred yards farther on. A shot in the neck finished him. The horns were just beginning to get corrugated, and were about 23 in. in length, with a girth of 16 in. I kept the head for some time as a memento of a curious incident, but eventually gave it away.

The bison is said to breed in the cold season, but this appears open to doubt. Burmese hunters aver that there is no fixed season either for bison or tsaing, and that the period of gestation for both species alike is eleven months. This view would seem to be more or less correct. Bison and tsaing are so closely allied that in this respect one would not expect to find any material difference. The writer has generally seen young bison calves in May, but once surprised a herd in July which had some young calves with it, one of which in a panic ran

straight into the tracker's arms, who promptly cut it down with a 'dah' before he could intervene. This calf was newly born; certainly not more than a fortnight old. The incident above related of the bison consorting with a herd of mithun occurred early in May, and during May, June and July the writer has frequently found tracks of a bull closely pursuing the cows of a herd. So that, if anything, the breeding season would appear to be during those months, rather than in the cold weather. I once shot a bull tsaing in November, in a herd which had several young calves with it, whose age could not have exceeded two months at the most. I do not remember ever to have seen quite young calves either of bison or tsaing during the latter part of the rains. During the cold weather bison or tsaing are rarely met with, owing to the height of the undergrowth and the hard state of the ground, which prevents tracking, so that, unfortunately, there is little data obtainable during the months of December, January, February and March. I once, however, met a couple of bison cows in the middle of December face to face as I topped a ridge. These animals were quite alone, which I think would hardly have been the case in the breeding season. This was in independent territory miles from anywhere, so there was no question of their having been disturbed.

Young bison calves are of a bright chestnut colour, and look very funny trotting alongside a herd of huge black animals. The dorsal ridge is distinct even at birth, or very shortly afterwards, and appears to grow very rapidly.

When feeding, bison move along fairly fast. They are not, however, such rapid walkers as tsaing. Supposing overnight tracks to have been found early in the morning, the animal ought to be overtaken with any luck in from four to five hours' time. If fresh tracks are struck, a bison can often be shot within an hour of being followed. Here, again, so much depends on one's trackers. A good man will know at once the approximate date of a track. A poor tracker will often follow a trail two days old or more, and will only find out his mistake after going several miles. I may here remark that though there is no mistaking an absolutely fresh track, it is often difficult to decide the date of one which is twelve hours old or more. This is especially the case when the ground is moist from recent rain. A leaf trampled on may be twenty-four hours old, but owing to the damp it is as green and fresh as if the bison had only just walked over it. This is where a poor tracker generally makes a mistake. Then, again, in the hot weather the stalks of grass which have been browsed on dry up, and turn yellow in a few hours under

the influence of a powerful sun. If the weather be damp or cloudy, and especially if there has been heavy rain, the bitten ends of the stalks will look as fresh as if the animal had just passed, whereas, actually, he may have left the spot some fifteen hours before. But I have generally found the Burman tracker to err on the other side. He is much more likely to say a doubtful track is yesterday's rather than to-day's—as he doesn't fancy a long, stern chase. Further remarks on tracking will be found in the chapter allotted to that subject.

It is very difficult to get a shot at a bison when he is lying up for the day. In the first place, he is certain to be in thick cover; secondly, he is lying down, and the black hide so matches the shade thrown by overhanging bamboos and vegetation that he is practically invisible until one is almost on top of him. Finally, a bison, when lying up, sleeps with one eye and both ears wide open, and though he is easier to surprise than a bull tsaing, still one may track solitary bison time after time when they are lying up without getting a shot. If one could only locate the beast it would not be so very difficult. But he may be just under that clump of bamboos in front of you, or he may be a mile farther on. You creep on, going as quietly as you can. Suddenly there is a terrific snort, and away thunders a huge, black form

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crashing down the hillside before you have time to raise your rifle, possibly without affording you even a glimpse of him. While you have been moving he has been quietly watching you, and as soon as he has made you out has lost no time in decamping. Bison have poor sight, but their hearing is very acute, and the sense of smell well developed. Both bison and tsaing can scent a man, if there is the faintest breeze, at a distance of 300 yards, and possibly farther. This doesn't come near an elephant's power, who will wind a man half a mile away at least; still, 300 yards is sufficiently far to afford *Bos gaurus* very efficient protection.

When feeding or moving about in cover, a solitary bull, especially if he is an old fellow, often keeps up a succession of loud grunts which can be heard some hundreds of yards away. This grunting is sometimes described as breathing; but it is palpably not so, since a bison whose suspicions are aroused will stand motionless, sometimes for minutes together, without making a sound. But a bull will occasionally, especially in hot weather, breathe loudly when walking. This, however, is quite distinct from the grunting, which is very loud and uttered at frequent intervals. Even when not grunting, a solitary bull, while feeding, makes such a noise tramping about in the undergrowth that he is easily approached for

the shot provided the hunter takes ordinary precautions. I need hardly say that anyone attempting to get up to a bison, whether feeding or not, must take the greatest care to move quietly. A dry twig snapping underfoot will be quite sufficient to scare him. A herd of bison, when feeding, makes far less noise than a solitary bull. Why this should be I don't know; but it certainly is the case, both with bison and tsaing. There is either no grunting at all, or it is so subdued as to be inaudible until one is quite close.

The advice given in the big-game volume of the Badminton Library as to running after a scared bison, whether he has been fired at or not, is undoubtedly sound; but other portions of that chapter, interesting as they are, are quite inapplicable to Burma. For instance, the writer, Lieutenant-Colonel Heber Percy, advocates riding along the tracks on a pony until close upon the animal. There is no ground that I know of in Burma where this is possible. Again, he says keep a hundred yards behind your trackers. If you did this, your Burman trackers would at once jump to the conclusion that you were afraid, and the tracking would be carried out in a very half-hearted fashion in consequence. But it must be remembered that the writer had done his tracking in India—a very different country to Burma.

A solitary bison when disturbed, so long as he has not winded the sportsman, almost invariably pulls up after going a hundred yards or so, and stops to listen, often for quite an appreciable time. If he hears footsteps clattering after him, of course he will be off; but if you rush after him as he bolts, any noise you may make is drowned in the crashing of the undergrowth as the bull gallops through it. When he pulls up, the sportsman stops likewise, and very often gets a chance of a shot. I lost the first bison I ever saw—a fine old solitary bull—partly owing to my tracker; but also in part owing to my ignorance of this habit. We had struck quite fresh tracks a little after 7 A.M., and came up with the beast in thick bamboo cover in about an hour's time. He was making a tremendous row, grunting away in happy unconsciousness of our proximity. I did not then know the average Burman as well as I do now, and foolishly took the man with me until we got to within twenty yards or so of the patch in which the bull was feeding. I then dropped the tracker behind a tree and telling him not to move, crept on to get the shot. I had not gone ten yards before I heard a pattering of feet behind me, and, looking round, saw to my dismay the wretched Burman legging it down the hill for all he was worth. At the same moment there was a crash inside

the patch, and as I sank on the ground part of the head of the bison emerged, and there he stood staring hard in my direction, but without, I think, actually seeing me. All that was visible of the beast was the grey forehead and the base of the massive horns. I suppose he stood motionless for quite a minute, while I sat facing him with the rifle at my shoulder, not knowing where on earth to aim. His nostrils were hidden by the fronds of bamboo, or I might easily have put a bullet up his broad nose. It was impossible to tell whether he was chest on to me, or three-quarters with head turned in my direction. My only chance of bagging him would have been to have aimed a couple of feet below his forehead, and to have fired through the leafy screen in the hope that my bullet would strike either the neck, chest or shoulder. That is what I ought to have done, but didn't. What I did, after cogitating for some time, was to draw a bead on the animal's forehead and press the trigger. I heard my bullet strike, and the next moment there was a loud snort as the bull dashed down the hill. I waited for perhaps a quarter of a minute, and then, thinking him gone for ever, sang out to the tracker. To my surprise there was another rush, not more than eighty yards away, and this time the bison departed for good. It was a great disappointment, but

the experience was useful to me afterwards. The tracker, erstwhile rather boastful, was now humble enough, and assured me that he would never run away again. As is generally the way, he never had the chance; for the rest of that shoot was a blank, and it was many a long day before I again had the opportunity of following bison. What had happened, of course, was that my bullet had glanced off the hard skull, the head being held high with nose poked out, the ordinary attitude of the *Bos* tribe when alarmed or suspicious. Could I have seen to aim a few inches lower, I have no doubt I could have found the brain by placing my bullet a little below the eyes, as the nose itself was invisible. I have since twice killed bison by this shot, when the animal has stood with nose poked out and the body has been hidden. Now, here was a beast who had just received a stunning crack on the top of the head and, in spite of it, had pulled up to ascertain what had caused it!

On another occasion I had knocked over a very fine herd bull. He picked himself up, and galloped after the herd. I legged it after him at my best pace up a slight rise, and on reaching the top saw the herd standing looking at me some 200 yards off. But the bull was not to be seen. Glancing hurriedly to the right and left, I suddenly spotted my friend,

standing in a listening attitude, about seventy yards away on my left. Before he could make up his mind, I had given him a solid soft-nose behind the shoulder, which practically did for him, though it took a few more shots to kill him. Had I not run after the bull as he bolted, I doubt whether I should have got him: it was late in the evening, and night was coming on. He was the biggest bison I ever bagged, and had a fine massive head measuring $31\frac{1}{2}$ in. along the right horn and $30\frac{1}{4}$ in. along the left. The girth of both horns was $18\frac{3}{4}$ in. And the moral of this is, that he who runs after a scared bison stands a good chance of promptly reaping the reward. You may run after a scared tsaing, though, till all's blue; but that animal is much too wary a wight to pull up till he has put a mile or more between himself and his pursuer, and then he won't give you even half a chance.

The bison has often been credited with a ferocity which is more in accordance with his formidable appearance than his habits. Doubtless, like all the *Bos* tribe, a wounded bull will charge now and again. But I think when this happens it is usually because the beast has received a trifling wound, or, at all events, one that is not mortal. With modern high-velocity rifles the poor beast gets such a terrific shock that all the fight is knocked out of him at the outset. The

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old writers lay great stress on a big bullet, and in those days it was absolutely essential. But it is penetration that tells, and even a small bullet passing through both lungs, or raking an animal from stem to stern, is bound to knock the stuffing out of him. At the same time, there is a limit, and anything smaller than a .400 bore would be a dangerous weapon to use on heavy game, besides losing one many a good beast.

One heard of many more accidents happening to men in the old days when following bison than seem to occur now. Smokeless powder undoubtedly is a great protection. An animal in these days rarely charges at the first shot. He is taken by surprise, and there is nothing to tell him from which direction the attack has come. If he does not gallop off, he may stand motionless for a few seconds, or may blunder on for half a dozen yards and then pull up, possibly with the idea of retaliating. Before he can make up his mind he is greeted with a second bullet, and may now charge, as he has received a clue to his adversary's whereabouts. But the sportsman is not blinded by smoke, and as the bull rushes at him with lowered head he has only to jump aside and allow it to pass him. The poor beast cannot go far. The second shot, thanks to smokeless powder, was probably in the right place, and when followed

up after a quarter of an hour's interval, to allow the wound to take effect, the bull will generally be found dead a few hundred yards farther on, or lying down too stiff to move. Except when shooting elephants, it is always advisable to give any wounded beast time to lie down and get stiff before following it up, so long, that is, as it cannot be kept in sight. Inexperienced natives, whether Burmans or others, generally want to rush excitedly after a wounded animal, with the result that they either blunder into a trap, or start the beast off, when he may go for miles and eventually escape.

In the old days men went out after bison armed very often with what was then known as a fowling-piece, in other words, an ordinary smooth-bore gun. This they loaded with an extra charge of black powder, which never exceeded six drams, and frequently contained only four. The bullet was of more or less hardened lead. With such ineffective weapons no wonder many of them got charged. The bull had to be followed up again and again until at last he succumbed to sheer lead-poisoning.

On separate occasions two old Burman hunters showed the writer scars of wounds received from charging bison, either of which would probably have killed a European. Both men had been charged from behind. One was caught in the posterior, the animal's horn having

penetrated the right buttock to a depth of about six inches. The healed scar showed what a gaping wound it must have inflicted. The other man was wounded high up in the thigh. The bison's horn had caught the back of the thigh, and, scraping the bone, had penetrated the limb and actually come through on the inside. It was a wonder the femoral artery was not severed. I asked the old hunter how long he had been laid up with this wound, to which he cheerfully replied that he was unable to move for six weeks, but that after that time the leg quickly healed. It speaks volumes for the pluck of both these men that after such an experience they should still have been keen to follow bison, but they were as staunch as possible, for I have seen them both tried pretty severely. Better trackers I have never known. I believe they could have tracked at any time of the year. When either of them took on a track, you knew for certain that you would come up with your beast sooner or later. But I am wandering off the tracks myself now, so let me pick them up again. I have mentioned these old hunters because their experience bears out what I have been saying, namely, that in nearly every case the cause of bison charging is due to a superficial wound having been inflicted on the animal in the first instance. Anyone who has seen the antiquated old muzzle-loader of the native

shikari, whether Indian or Burman, taking about three drams of indifferent powder, and carrying either a charge of slugs or a shapeless bullet formed from hammered wire or any other metal that comes handy, will realise the amount of penetration such a weapon is likely to possess on an animal whose hide alone is over an inch thick. I could quote several instances of bison having given trouble when fired at with worthless weapons; but I do not want to labour the point, so will merely mention one. Years ago, an officer in the regiment with which the writer was then serving sallied forth to shoot bison, armed, if you please, with a .450 express black-powder rifle and hollow bullets. He got up to a solitary bull and, what is more, succeeded in killing it, but not before he had put fifteen bullets into it, and the bison had charged him over and over again. He told me that the time he spent dodging the bull round and round a thick tree nearly turned his hair grey. The officer in question was a splendid shot, and the last man in the world to exaggerate. He said the beast seemed to mind the shots no more than if they had been peas, in spite of nearly every one being in the right place. After being wounded several times, the bull stood in the open, and at every shot charged down on the sportsman, pulling up a few yards beyond him, and charging back as he was again fired at. This officer was an

exceptionally active man, and probably only escaped being gored by his activity and straight shooting. I saw the head hanging up in his house, and a very fine one it was. Here was a case in which ignorance nearly cost a man his life. This rifle had accounted for several tigers, so its owner had come to regard it as good enough for anything. But he parted with it shortly after his experience with the bison, and I imagine was uncommonly glad to do so.

When firing at bison, aim should be taken, whenever possible, low down behind the shoulder, considerably lower, that is, than one would aim if firing at a stag. The high dorsal ridge is deceptive, and bison are often lost owing to the bullet striking too high and so missing the vitals.



BANTING
(*Bos Sondaicus*)

CHAPTER III

THE BANTING (BOS SONDAICUS)

(*Burmese, 'Tsaing'*)

THIS animal ranges throughout Burma and the Malay Peninsula, and is found also in parts of Siam, Sumatra, Borneo and Java. In appearance he is not unlike a large Hereford bull, but is a very much larger beast—massively built, standing about sixteen hands at the shoulders, and occasionally higher. Old bulls have been shot measuring fully seventeen hands. He is the wild ox of Burma, and has been described as a miniature gaur. This description, which is accurate enough so far as it goes, is, nevertheless, somewhat misleading. He may be a miniature gaur, but is an uncommonly big miniature. There is nothing diminutive or weedy about him. He may stand a trifle higher in the leg than the bison, but his legs are none the less short and sturdy; as they need to be to support the huge body. The hoof is very neat and small for so large a beast. In shape he is not unlike the bison, except that the dorsal ridge, though well defined, is much

lower. He has the same short, thick neck, with practically no dewlap ; the head, however, is entirely different. There is no concavity below the horns and no arch to the nose, the skull being quite straight from the horns downwards to the nasal bone. There is a great mass of yellowish flesh between the horns which is quite hairless, and almost as hard as the skull itself. The cows are much less heavily built, and are very like large English cattle, except that their heads are more deer-like in appearance. The delicate, well-bred appearance of the head is strikingly noticeable when a herd of startled tsaing stands at gaze. The head, indeed, of a cow tsaing is very like that of an Alderney, and the animal has the same large, liquid-brown eye which enables it to keep an uncommonly sharp look-out.

In colour the cows and young bulls are a bright chestnut, with white face, white stockings and a white patch on the buttocks. This white marking is common to both sexes. The bull varies considerably in colour, according to age and locality. In Java, I believe, old bulls are almost invariably black. Black bulls are very rare in Burma ; but I once saw three old bulls in a herd which were so black that at first I took them for bison. On another occasion I came across an old bull almost entirely chocolate in colour. But, ordinarily, in Burma the older the bull the lighter he is. Young bulls of five or six years of age

are practically the same colour as the cows, but often have white spots on the flanks, which in course of time merge into each other and turn a dirty grey. Older animals are usually a yellowish brown, sometimes turning to a dirty grey on the sides and flanks. The whole face down to the muzzle in old bulls is generally a dirty white, almost approaching to grey. Old bulls of a dirty grey colour throughout are occasionally met with, and these animals always possess magnificent heads. But whatever his colour, there is no mistaking an old bull when seen with a herd, even in thick cover. His coat is quite different from the bright chestnut of the cows. His prevailing colour may be red, but it will be a dull, yellowish red, the shade of a withered leaf, or the red of old brown canvas. Have nothing to say to a bright chestnut-coloured tsaing, for his head assuredly will not be worth carting away. The horns are unlike those of the bison. They stand out at right angles to the skull, turning upwards and inwards somewhat abruptly. They are usually shorter in length than the horns of a bison, and smaller in girth. In colour they are very similar, and are deeply corrugated when they belong to an old bull. Good average horns measure about 24 in. in length, with a girth of 14 in., and a spread of from 25 in. to 30 in. Anything over 25 in. is a very good head. Occasionally tsaing

with enormous heads measuring over 30 inches, with a girth of 18 inches, are shot. But these heads are as rare as bison heads of 40 inches, and no one need be ashamed of a 24-inch head, if well corrugated and with a good span. The cows have short horns a few inches in length, growing almost straight upwards, smooth throughout, and with no girth.

Taken all round, a bull tsaing is a handsome animal; but what a beast he is to get on terms with! The Ladak shapoo (*Ovis vignei*) is generally considered, and with reason, a difficult beast to shoot. But he is a child in cuteness compared with an old bull tsaing. After many years' experience of *Bos sondaicus* under all sorts of conditions, and at all seasons, I have no hesitation in declaring an old bull to be the cutest, wariest beast that ever roamed the jungle. He has given me longer tramps and more disappointments than bison and elephants put together. As so often happens, a beginner goes out after tsaing, hits on red-hot tracks or meets the animal face to face, and gets an easy shot under peculiarly favourable circumstances, possibly at a young beast. Thereafter he announces that tsaing are easy animals to shoot. I knew one man who, in an out-of-the-way spot where elephants were numerous, made a practice of shooting tsaing from the back of an elephant. In this way he secured some fine heads, and had

rather a low opinion of tsaing in consequence. But later, when circumstances necessitated his following them on foot, he very speedily changed his opinion. All animals accustomed to wild elephants will allow a tame one to come quite close; they suspect no danger, and take no notice of the rider until they get his wind.

Tsaing have wonderful eyesight, and their powers of hearing are almost abnormally developed. In both these respects they can give points to the bison. Their sense of smell is about on a par with that of the bison; that is to say, they can wind a man at a distance of 300 yards, which is quite sufficient for their needs. They are fast walkers; so that a man finding tracks at about 7 A.M. will be lucky indeed to come up with his beast before it is down for the day. There is no depending on tsaing. The writer once came on a beast lying up at 7 A.M., in cloudy weather too. Needless to say, he got no shot that journey. An old bull is as full of dodges as a monkey is of tricks. When alarmed he will not only travel through the thickest cover he can find, but will creep through places which one would scarcely believe it possible for a beast of his size to pass. I don't mean merely dense jungle, through which he can easily force a passage, but low arches formed by intertwining creepers, bamboos and vegetation, which completely shut out the sky,

and which are much too dense to be forced asunder. He creeps under such places, which are often not more than 4 ft. 6 in. high, like a cunning old stag, with nose held low and bent legs, while the wretched sportsman, following in his wake, has to move along doubled up and dripping perspiration from every pore. The longer these abominable natural arches are, and the oftener he can find them, the better pleased the brute is; in fact, he seems to go out of his way to travel through them, probably with the idea of shaking off pursuit. A scared bull will often, when crossing a stream, wade for several hundred yards and ascend the opposite bank a quarter of a mile or more higher up, or lower down, with the evident intention of confusing his trackers. Needless to say that when alarmed he always travels down wind. I don't know that he has yet attained to walking backwards, with a view to hiding his tracks, but he is not far off it! Then he has an almost uncanny instinct of the presence of danger. He may neither have winded, seen nor heard you; and yet you won't be long in the presence of an old bull before he finds you out, though you may not have moved hand or foot. And the cunning way in which the old fellow will select a spot to lie up in! A bison contents himself with diving into thick bamboo jungle and lying down under

a shady clump. A tsaing prefers rising ground, preferably a knoll, where he can see all round him and get the wind from every quarter. Here I would digress for a moment to say that tsaing found in the bamboo jungles of the hills are much more easily stalked than when in the indaing forests of the dry and intermediate zones; that is to say, in places where the rainfall may vary from twenty-five inches (in the dry zone) to seventy or more outside this belt. Bamboo jungle invariably grows in hilly country at any elevation from 500 to 3000 feet above sea-level, and often higher, and is more or less dependent on a heavy rainfall. Indaing forest, on the contrary, is generally met with in the plains—occasionally in the dry belt, but more frequently in the intermediate zone. In bamboo jungle the tsaing depends on thick cover for security. The low hills consist for the most part of a succession of ridges which merge into one another, and are generally more or less open at the top, with streams running at the foot. Isolated knolls are rarely found. The tsaing therefore selects as a resting-place either the side of a hill, or thick cover at the foot, on rising ground. The dense foliage protects him from view, but frequently affords the same advantage to the hunter. The nature of the soil under foot is soft, leaving good imprints of the tracks, and the dried

leaves, which are naturally chiefly those of the bamboo, are small and, after a few showers, give out no sound when walked over, however thickly they may cover the ground. It is easy enough to lose the tracks on them nevertheless. They act as a sort of soft carpet, and unless very sodden, spring up after being pressed down by the animal's hooves, often retaining no impression. An old bull tsaing in bamboo jungle frequently takes up his permanent residence in a thick strip some miles in extent. In this he wanders about browsing on shrubs and shoots, and rarely venturing into the open except at night. It will thus be seen that in bamboo jungle the wonderful powers of sight, hearing and scent possessed by the tsaing are to some extent discounted. His native wariness remains, however, and this always makes him, under any circumstances, a more difficult beast to bag than the bison.

In indaing forest, which the tsaing particularly affects, he is quite a different beast. Here there is little or no thick cover. The 'In' tree varies from a stunted shrub to a large tree growing fairly closely together, but not so close as to prevent a good view for fifty yards or more all round. The ground is sometimes quite flat, sometimes hilly; but its chief feature is the number of small knolls which are constantly met with. These are the favourite

resting-places of a solitary bull. Any breeze there may be reaches him from all sides, affording coolness and protection alike. He trusts more to his sense of hearing than eyesight, and prefers to take up a position some distance from the brow, so that he can hear an approach from any direction. In this he is aided by the nature of the trees and shrubs growing in his habitat. The 'In' tree, which is a sort of bastard teak, has a large leaf, with which the ground is plentifully besprinkled. When dry they crackle abominably underfoot, and it takes a deal of rain to render them noiseless. The shrubs of 'In' and other vegetation, all with exasperatingly gigantic leaves, intermingle and form a screen, which may be knee or waist high, according to the time of year. Go as noiselessly as you may, the leaves brushing against your knees are bound to make a faint rustle which is quite sufficient to put the tsaing on his guard. He gets on his legs, and remains absolutely motionless. Then, as the hunter's head appears over the crest of the knoll, there is a loud snort, and away thunders the bull, to be seen no more for that day at all events.

Consequently, solitary bulls when lying down for the day are very rarely shot. It is, indeed, believed to be an almost impossible feat to shoot a solitary bull tsaing when lying up in 'In' jungle. Nevertheless, one's trackers, with

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true Oriental optimism, will attempt the impossible time after time, and, with few exceptions, never seem to learn by failure. On one occasion, however, the writer did succeed in shooting an old solitary bull tsaing while lying up, but that was in bamboo jungle and under exceptionally favourable circumstances. As an example of the good luck which frequently attends the hunter, the incident may be worth narrating. We were in hilly country in the Chindwin district, frequented alike by bison and tsaing, and had made an early start by candlelight. For some hours we hunted about, but found nothing but old tracks. At last, about 8 A.M., we came on the trail of a solitary bull tsaing which had passed early the day before. The tracks showed that the bull was a good one; so we took them on without hesitation. They zigzagged about in the most perplexing manner; but as we could not hope to come up with the beast—or, at all events, to get a shot at him—before the evening, time was not of great consequence. Several times the bull had retraced his steps to browse on some succulent bit of herbage, and had then resumed his original direction. After following the trail for some three hours or so, we found that it crossed those of another solitary beast, whose tracks were about the same date as those we were following. The old adage that

it never rains but it pours was here exemplified. We had evidently struck, or were making for, a favourite bit of ground. The tracks we had just found were huge if made by a tsaing, and one of the trackers persisted that they were those of a bison. After examining them closely, I came to the conclusion that they *were* tsaing tracks, and in this opinion the other tracker concurred. So, not without some qualms, I decided to relinquish the trail we had been following, and to take on the other. If, after all, the beast turned out to be a bison it would certainly be a young bull. I may here remark for the benefit of those of my readers who have, perhaps, had little experience of tracking, that the tracks of a young bull bison and those of an old bull tsaing are so alike as to be practically indistinguishable. A big bull bison, however, makes a track which cannot be confounded with that of any tsaing.

The trail now entered thick bamboo jungle, and stuck to it so persistently that it was evident the animal had made his head quarters in it. We had followed the tracks for a couple of hours, and so far had not even come on those of the previous night. My intention was to follow till we came on his fresh tracks, and then to sit down and wait till the evening, as in this stuff he might be lying up anywhere. Presently the leading tracker stopped, and we heard the

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cracking of bamboos. It was only caused by a troop of monkeys, who now sprang over our heads among the bamboos, kicking up a tremendous row. At this moment also we put up a pair of jungle fowl, which flew off with a cackle of alarm. I had a small terrier with me who was used to following big game, and would never leave my heel till ordered, taking absolutely no notice of monkeys or game birds, and such small fry. Somewhat to my surprise she now showed signs of excitement, running to one side and sniffing and staring in the direction the jungle fowl had flown. I snapped my fingers at her, and she came back to heel; but only to run aside and sniff as before. Knowing that she would not leave me, I paid no further attention to her. We had gone on another twenty yards or so, when suddenly I heard a clucking sound from the tracker behind me. I turned round to find him squatting and pointing excitedly in the direction in which the jungle fowl had flown. Not knowing what to make of it, I crept back, and then saw the red hide of a bull tsaing standing broadside on about thirty yards away, partly concealed by the bamboo foliage. Fortunately my rifle was loaded, and without loss of time I let him have a solid nickel as near the shoulder as I could judge. At the shot he took a few strides forward and stood again, still broadside on and partially

hidden. He moved just as I fired the second barrel, and on receiving the bullet wheeled sharp round and charged straight down at me. Having no mind to be hunted with an empty rifle in my hands, I let him come almost within striking distance, and then took a big jump aside. The bull, having missed his point, went thundering on. This was too much for Dot, the terrier, who up to now had been as quiet as a mouse. She rushed out at the bull with a yelp of excitement, but he only shook his head at her and went on. A whistle brought her back to me. She had smelt the tsaing when the jungle fowl got up, hence her suppressed excitement, and I had in my mind accused her of a desire to chase them, a thing she never did.

The trackers, having naturally made themselves scarce when the bull charged, now appeared, and we sat down for twenty minutes to let the shots take effect before following him up. While waiting I went to the spot where we had surprised the bull, and there found a comfortable bed of dried leaves on which the old fellow had been resting. I now took one tracker with me and followed the tsaing. There was no blood spoor, but the tracking was easy. When we had gone some 300 yards the tracker pointed him out. He was standing with head down beside a bamboo clump. I tried to fire, but the shot refused to go off, and looking at

the rifle I saw that I had forgotten to slip the safety catch forward. Before I could again take aim the bull had moved slowly on, but only for a few yards, when he again stood, giving me his back to aim at, into which I put another solid nickel. He rushed off at the shot and, listening intently, I heard him fall. So we followed up at once, and now found plenty of blood. To my surprise, however, he was again found standing broadside on, giving me this time a clear shot at the shoulder. Aiming low down behind it, I fired a soft-nosed bullet, on receiving which the bull rushed off as before. Presently we heard him blundering about, and then all sounds ceased. I thought it as well to give him another ten minutes, and then followed up alone, as the blood spoor was plentiful and the tracker was not required. In a little while I spotted him lying down beside a bamboo clump with his head up, looking at me. I fired again, but there was no response; he was dead at last. On going up to him I found he had fallen against the clump, which had caught one of his horns, and had twisted the head round and held it up, giving the impression of the animal being alive. He was a very old bull: his eyes were sunken, and a cataract had formed in one of them, which accounted for his allowing us to surprise him. The teeth were much worn, and blackened from age. The Burmans put him

down as thirty years old; he was certainly twenty, if a day. His face was very wrinkled, and covered with old scars, and his ears were torn to ribbons; but there was not a recent scar about him. The old fellow had probably lived a hermit's life for years. The horns were massive, very heavily corrugated, and of a good length. They spanned nearly a yard, measured straight across from the inside of one horn to the inside of the other, and 30 inches from tip to tip.

In spite of his great age this bull was a red tsaing, his coat being of a faded red, with no grey about him, except on his face and stockings, which were of a dirty white almost approaching ash colour. The patch on the buttocks was quite white—as is the case with all tsaing, of whatever age. A solitary bull which I had shot a few days previously, though much younger than this animal, was considerably lighter in colour, with grey patches on his flanks.

It is instructive to note the circumstances which led up to the death of this old bull as just narrated. The animal's keen senses were impaired by age, which prevented him from seeing us, as we passed him, and hearing our footsteps. The monkeys and jungle fowl—probably the latter—had put him to a certain extent on the alert, and had caused him to rise, and so had given me my opportunity; for the

tracker, keen sighted as he is, could not in that thick cover have seen the bull lying down. Neither bison nor tsaing appear to take much notice of monkeys. They are so used to their incessant movement and jabbering that they pay little attention to them. A startled jungle fowl or partridge, however, puts them on the *qui vive* at once. But what really gave me this tsaing was the fact of our being on old tracks when he was seen. Had he not been observed in the first instance, we would naturally have followed the trail which, after leading more or less straight on for two or three miles, had doubled back parallel to the original tracks. Following it, we would have come face to face with the tsaing, and old as he was, he would almost certainly have heard our approach when within fifteen or twenty yards' distance. Then there would have been the usual snort of derision, followed by a crash as the beast vanished in the undergrowth. By a happy combination of circumstances, that fickle jade Fortune played into my hands in a manner she has seldom done before or since. I may add that the ground was sodden with recent rain, and that I had donned stalking boots as soon as it became evident that the animal was somewhere in that particular jungle.

This is the only time I have ever been charged in earnest either by bison or tsaing. The

tsaing, whose suspicions had been aroused before being fired at, was evidently a crusty old gentleman, and had I been using a black-powder rifle would probably have charged at the first shot, as soon as the smoke had betrayed his adversary. As it was, he waited until a second shot made our position clear to him. He was too badly wounded to give further trouble.

It is hardly possible to exercise too much caution when following up a wounded beast. All the *Bos* tribe have an unpleasant habit of occasionally turning off at right angles, and then retracing their steps for a short distance in thick cover, keeping parallel with the original track. The beast then stands hidden from view intently watching his trail, and as the sportsman in following it passes the spot where the animal is waiting, it rushes out and charges him from behind. The Burmans mentioned in the chapter on bison were caught in this way—both men alike having followed up the animal at once after wounding it, believing it too badly hurt to charge. The writer knows of an instance in which a European, a coffee-planter in Mysore, was caught by a charging bison in this way and almost killed. The horn caught him between the shoulders, entirely penetrating one lung. The victim owed his life to a magnificent constitution, and the promptitude with which he was sent to England as soon as he could be moved.

In this case the hunter was in no way to blame. He had, indeed, the cruelest luck it is possible to imagine. The day before the accident, a young assistant or a guest—I am not sure which, and it really doesn't matter; in any case, he was a tyro—had wounded a bull bison which succeeded in getting away, and he returned empty-handed, having given up the hunt as hopeless. Next morning, Mr. —, the coffee-planter, who had accounted for many bison and was well known as a good sportsman, went out himself after bison, with no idea of attempting to find the wounded beast, which might have gone off for twenty miles for all he knew to the contrary. He struck the fresh tracks of a solitary bull—not the wounded animal—and was following them when he heard a snort and a rush in the jungle just behind him. As he was in the act of turning the beast was on him, and tossed him in the air, going on after the first rush. The trail the sportsman had been following led, by the greatest ill luck, past the cover in which the wounded bull was lying up, and, hearing footsteps approaching, it had risen to its feet determined on revenge. A more scurvy trick for Fortune to play a man than this it is hardly possible to conceive.

Tsaing are very noiseless feeders; much more so than bison. A herd of tsaing scarcely makes any sound at all. I once heard tsaing in the

very early morning lowing like domestic cattle. The herd was separated, and possibly the lowing was a call to unite the scattered members. In this case, unfortunately for the tsaing, it gave the writer a clue to their whereabouts, with the result that he was able to get up to them and bag the bull. A solitary bull tsaing often grunts like bison, but never so loudly. But the grunting can frequently be heard when close, as also the noise the bull makes when tramping about in cover.

Tsaing stick more to the plains than do bison, and are very partial to open patches of grass known in Burma as 'quins.' But they are good climbers nevertheless, and the way a herd will gallop along the side of a steep hill has to be seen to be realised.

Good trackers will know what places to make for as likely to afford the best chance of finding fresh tracks. It is always worth while visiting the 'quins' on tsaing ground.

The objection to following a herd of tsaing does not hold good to the same extent as it does with bison, provided the tracks show that there is a decent bull with the herd. As I have said, a bull tsaing can be distinguished at once from the rest of the herd, both from his superior height and distinctive colouring. At the same time, tsaing are such wary creatures, and such silent movers and feeders, that there is always a great

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risk of the sportsman being discovered by some keen-eyed cow before he can view the herd. It pays, therefore, to follow solitary bulls in preference to herds when circumstances are favourable.

A solitary bull when feeding, though far more wary than a bison, is occasionally fairly easily circumvented. But whoever takes on the tracks of tsaing, whether those of a solitary bull or herd, must be prepared for a long tramp, with possible disappointment at the end of it. In no branch of big-game shooting is it more necessary to have good trackers. Tsaing, as I have said, are fast movers, much faster walkers than bison. They will usually be moving considerably faster than one can track. One comes up with them only because they stop from time to time for a few minutes to feed in certain places where the grass and herbage particularly appeals to them, and also because, before lying up for the day, they wander slowly about on the spot they have selected before finally settling themselves. Constant checks and 'scratching about' are annoying when following any animal; but with tsaing they are positively fatal. Another thing about tsaing is, that frequently they give no indication that they are close by. This is the case more particularly when following solitary bulls. The droppings are less frequent than with bison; probably because tsaing move

faster, and so cover more ground in the same space of time. Warm droppings are by no means always an indication that the animal is close. He may be two miles ahead of you still. Droppings retain their heat for a considerable time—half an hour or longer. If they are very warm, then it is certain that the animal is close at hand. On the other hand, the droppings may be stone cold, and going on a couple of hundred yards you may run straight into your beast. He has either been lying down or has come back on his trail. This has happened to the writer time after time, both when following tsaing and bison. Flies buzzing about the tracks or fresh urine are a pretty certain indication that he is not far off; but often you find neither; nor is the friendly root with juice still oozing from the trampled pith always *en évidence*. In short, after finding certain indications that the beast has passed not long before, you may still walk for two or three miles without any sort of sign, until suddenly the unexpected happens, and either your trackers catch sight of him or, what is more likely, there is a crash in the jungle ahead of you, and away goes your tsaing. When you do get indications that you are close to him, then, if he is not lying up, and the approach is made with the utmost care, the chances of bagging him are in your favour.

When tracking a herd of either bison or

tsaing one can often detect when close to them a strong bovine scent, like that emanating from a cattle-pen. But I have never been able to get this scent while following a single beast.

In the hot weather it is often a good plan to sleep on the tracks. You have followed a beast till dusk, let us say, and he is still some miles ahead of you. Instead of wearily tramping back a dozen miles or more to camp, you prepare for a night out. It is pleasant enough in the hot weather under a fine starlit sky, especially if you have brought a clean flannel shirt with you, and have some cold food left over from the morning. But don't be persuaded to trying this game in the rains, unless you wish to have a certain 'go' of malaria which may keep you in bed for weeks. As soon as it is light enough to see, you take on the tracks next morning, and if you don't come up with the beast by eight or nine o'clock you will be very unlucky indeed. What matters it that you have a fifteen-mile trudge back into camp if you have got the tail of a fine old bull tsaing to show for it?

I have already aired my theory about solitary bulls in the chapter on bison, and I do not find it differs in respect to tsaing. Unfortunately, when tracking up a solitary tsaing, it is sometimes impossible to tell what sort of head he has; still, as a rule, if the tracks are not those

of an 'atee gyi' (*Anglice*, Big Bull) it is not worth while following them.

I remember once, however, following the trail of a herd the bull of which had left tracks which were certainly not those of a big animal. They were of medium size, and after much deliberation I was only induced to follow them by the size of the herd, which numbered about ten animals. As the ground had been undisturbed it was likely, other considerations apart, to have more than one bull with it, and the herd leader might be expected to have a decent head. Indeed, the tracks showed that there were two other bulls, young animals, with it. When, after a long tramp, I came up with the herd, I found to my joy that the best bull had a khaki-coloured coat, so all doubts as to his age were dispelled. He acknowledged the shot by galloping off; but before he could disappear in the undergrowth, a second bullet caught him in the rump and, raking him, bowled him over. He had quite a good head, the horns, which were well corrugated, measuring 25 in., with a good span. This animal was exceptionally small for his age, which I put down at about ten years. I have since, however, on several occasions followed solitary bulls whose tracks were smaller than I like to see, and have invariably found the owner to be a young bull, bright chestnut in colour, with a head not worth taking.

The following three instances, which occurred quite recently, almost on successive days, illustrate the uncertainty of tsaing shooting. Fresh tracks of a large solitary bull were found at 6.30 A.M. on the first day, and were followed till 10.30, but we were unable to come up with the beast; so, having tracked him into heavy jungle, where he would almost certainly be lying up, we sat down to wait till evening for the chance of a shot. At 2 P.M., however, a heavy shower came down—it was at the end of July—completely washing out the tracks, and I had, therefore, to return empty-handed to camp. The next morning I left camp at 4 A.M., and at 6 came on absolutely fresh tracks of a large solitary bull. Mindful of how I had been done out of a shot by the rain the day before, I determined to follow this beast till I came up with him, regardless of whether he was lying up or not. At first we went along very carefully; but presently came on cold droppings, so pushed along as quickly as we could track, in order to come up with him while he was still feeding. At 8 o'clock we found a place where he had lain down for a few minutes. At 10, however, we were no nearer to him. The tracks showed that the beast was not alarmed; but they led through abominably thick bamboo jungle into cover so dense that we could hardly force our way. At 10.30 I

called a halt, and we had some food, resuming the tracking at 10.50. We now found more droppings, still quite cold. At 2 P.M. we reached a 'choung,' and the tracker was now able to make a guess as to the jungle the beast was heading for. It, the jungle, was quite close; so, as there were no signs of rain, we halted till 3.30, in case the bull should be lying up. On resuming the tracking I went ahead, as we expected to see him at any moment. But still the tracks led onwards and ever onwards, until I began to think the beast must have some suspicion that he was being followed. But no, the trail zig-zagged from right to left and left to right, but always heading in one general direction. At 4.30 we struck the second place he had lain down in, but apparently he had only rested for a short time. All this time the beast had not once stopped to feed; he had merely snatched a mouthful of grass here and there at long intervals. We found more cold droppings at his resting-place, and at 5 P.M. some more, still quite cold. As it was now evident that the bull was some way yet ahead of us, I gave place to the tracker, and we pushed along at a great rate, regardless of noise, as everything depended on our getting up to him before dark. At 5.30 we found more droppings, warm this time. Thank goodness, we were close to the brute at last! The tracker still led, but we went more slowly,

and as the trail now took us into fairly open bamboo jungle I expected to see or hear him every moment. Suddenly there was a snort and a crash. The tsaing had vanished without even giving us a glimpse of him ! On going to the spot we found the brute had been lying down ! I looked at my watch. It was ten minutes to six. From six in the morning till six in the evening had we followed this child of the devil, with only a break of twenty minutes for food, and a rest of one and a half hours in the middle of the day to give him an opportunity of resuming his ramble, only to find him lying down at nightfall ! This beast was quite the worst tsaing I have ever followed. Had we got near him an hour earlier, I would again have gone ahead, and crept along in his tracks ; but time was so short that I could no longer afford to do so. The tsaing, who was changing his ground, had covered about fifteen miles ; but fortunately ended up two miles from a village, where I was able to get a pony and ride to camp, arriving at 10 P.M.

No rain falling in the night I took the next day off ; but a heavy shower fell in the evening. I therefore left camp at 4 A.M. on the following morning, arriving on my ground at 5.30. At 7 A.M. we struck overnight tracks of a solitary bull, and soon came on freshly bitten grass. At 7.30 we found warm droppings. Here I led,

as tracking was easy, and presently Dot showed signs of excitement, stopping and sniffing the air. We now redoubled our precautions, as, from the bitch's demeanour, it was evident we were close on our game. We were in open bamboo jungle, and as we crept along my eye was suddenly caught by what appeared to be a huge piece of yellow wood about a hundred yards off. The binoculars showed it to be the dorsal ridge and back of a tsaing, which was lying down with head hidden behind a bamboo clump. The body was also half hidden by the undergrowth, now waist high, but by moving a little to one side I was able to find an opening, and drawing a bead on the broad back, I pressed the trigger. The bull jumped up; but stood still even after seeing us, apparently unable to move. A second bullet in the neck rolled him over. The first bullet, a solid nickel, had struck fair in the centre of the back, and had paralysed the animal. He was about eight years old, with a very fair head. This bull was shot at ten minutes to eight; that is, within an hour of finding the tracks of the previous night.

These two last examples show what an uncertain brute a tsaing is. In the one case absolutely fresh tracks were found at 6 A.M., and yet the beast led us a dance for fifteen miles and disappointed us in the end. It is

true he was changing his ground ; all the more reason why he should have been found feeding on it in the evening, instead of lying down out of sheer cussedness. In the other instance the tsaing was also found lying down ; but, unfortunately for himself, so early that we were able to take our time about approaching him. Tsaing, by the way, do not appear to exercise any particular care about the selection of their temporary resting-places. Very different is the attention given to the spot in which the beast finally lies up for the day. Bison can generally be trusted not to lie down till 9 A.M., or thereabouts ; but tsaing are as full of surprises as an egg is of meat. On the day of our long tramp I had left Dot in camp, as she was slightly lame, otherwise no doubt she would have warned us of the tsaing's proximity, as she did on this occasion.

Before closing this chapter I must just say a few words about the little terrier above mentioned, who still accompanies me after big game. As a rule, it does not pay to take out dogs except when bird shooting, terriers least of all. The average terrier gives tongue on the smallest provocation, and the sight of a barking deer or hare jumping up under its nose and scuttling off is a temptation to give chase which few terriers can resist. Still, some men may say that if they can't take their dog

with them they would rather not go out at all, and my own has proved such a faithfully to her master that I should be the last person to attempt to dissuade them. So I will merely say that if your dog does accompany you after heavy game it must be absolutely obedient, must be trained to keep not only to heel, but with its head almost touching your leg, and that whether in the open or in thick jungle. It should not take the faintest notice of the scent, sound or sight of deer or small game, and when at length your game is sighted, or when you are drawing close, it should be absolutely mute, remaining at your heel both before and after the shot. I need hardly say that a dog intended to be taken out after big game should never be indulged with an off day at deer or birds. It is scarcely to be expected that a dog used to seeing its master shoot small game will show no signs of excitement on meeting with it when it is not the object of pursuit. It cannot possibly understand that what is lawful game one day is taboo the next. Therefore, if you must have a dog with you, let it be kept entirely for one branch of sport. The writer has been the fortunate possessor of several good terriers, but has never had a dog to equal this; though one other—also a bitch—was nearly as good.

Dot was bred from a dog of my own, and

came into my possession when she was six months old. Fortunately, she had never been taken out shooting, so I had virgin soil to work on. Her education, however, started badly, as when first introduced to firearms she proved to be very gun-shy. I cured her of this in a few days by a combination of patience, kindness and severity which would take too long to describe. In a short time the sight of gun or rifle in my hands would send her frantic with delight. In order to cure her absolutely of gun-shyness, and to give her a taste for sport, I had to shoot some doves and partridges, allowing her to run up and sniff the dead birds; but always keeping her at heel until told to go forward. As soon as she got keen I stopped this, and then took her out two or three times after deer, always keeping her at heel, even after firing the shot. She was then taken up to the dead animal. Now came the hardest part of her education. I had been obliged to enter her on birds and deer, because it was necessary to make her keen, and because I was debarred from practising on tame cattle, which would have been the best education for her. She had now to unlearn what she had been taught. I used to take her out where birds, hares or barking deer were plentiful, and put up as many as I could, always carrying an unloaded gun. When anything got up I strolled

on without taking any notice. The dog would stop with uplifted paw wondering why her master didn't shoot, and occasionally would start off in chase of a hare or deer. A sharp whistle generally brought her back; but in any case I never waited for her, but continued to stroll on. When she arrived she was severely rated. Gradually, seeing her master taking no notice of these alluring objects of the chase, she began to disregard them also, and in a short time showed no excitement if a barking deer or hare started up under her very nose. The rest was easy. After shooting two or three bison, she quickly realised that this was the game of game, and the only sort that mattered. And now I would almost as soon think of going out without my rifle as without her. When close on an animal her demeanour shows at once that the beast is near. Absolutely mute, she quivers all over with suppressed excitement, standing with uplifted paw and staring hard in the direction from which she gets the scent. More than once she has put me on the alert when I have not expected to see the animal for another hour or so. She knows as well as her master how necessary it is to make a silent approach, and when I am creeping up for the shot she sneaks along at my heel like a little shadow. She is very small, weighing only ten pounds, and at any time makes but little noise

pattering over the leaves. When close on a herd I have her carried by a coolie, not because I am afraid that she will do anything to betray her presence, but because her white coat might be seen by an outlying member of the herd. I have only once known her give way to momentary excitement, and that was when a tsaing charged, as already narrated. But the reader will admit that the circumstances were sufficiently unusual to provoke any self-respecting dog! I hope this description of Dot and her doings hasn't bored the reader. If it has, I'm sorry; but I'm afraid I can't apologise. I should be guilty of the basest ingratitude if, when writing a book on big-game shooting, I omitted to pay a tribute to the staunchest little ally that ever followed a hunter. Dot, indeed, deserves a chapter all to herself. If she could only tell them, I am sure her experiences would be most interesting; as it is, she has had to rely on her master to interpret them to the best of his ability.

Since writing the above I have had proof positive that solitary bulls do consort with herds—proof also, incidentally, that tsaing breed in the rains. Whether they do so at other times of the year I am not prepared to say. Although this chapter has already exceeded its intended limits, the instance referred to is such a striking confirmation of the writer's



‘ DOT ’

assertion as to so-called solitary bulls mixing with herds, that in the interests of natural history it merits attention.

During July of this year I was hunting tsaing in the Chindwin district, and in spite of an abnormal break in the rains, lasting (with the exception of a few light, local showers) for a month, had had very good sport, bagging four tsaing—all solitary bulls—only one of which was a young bull. As the undergrowth was now waist high everywhere, and in places over six feet in height, I intended to give the tsaing one more day, and then return to civilisation. The rain came down in torrents during the night, and it was still pouring in the morning. It cleared up about 9 A.M., however; so, after breakfast, I went out to look for tracks. As luck had it, fresh tracks of a large solitary bull were found within two miles of camp. The tracks were so big that at first they were mistaken for those of a bison. We followed them for some distance, when down came the rain again, speedily washing out the marks; so we returned to camp, intending to visit the same spot next day, in the hope of finding fresh tracks.

Next morning it was still raining, but stopped at 5 A.M. I started off at six in no very sanguine frame of mind, as the sky was black with heavy clouds, telling of impending rain; but presently

it cleared up, the sun came out, and the black clouds gave way to lighter ones. Just before reaching the place where we had found the big tracks of the day before, we came on fresh tracks of a herd of tsaing, and a few hundred yards farther on struck the fresh trail of the big solitary bull, no longer solitary, however, for, on tracking him up, we found he had joined the herd. This, though interesting as confirming my ideas on the subject, was by no means an unmixed blessing, as it would make getting up to him much more difficult, and so it proved. We now found warm droppings, and as tracking was easy I led the way, creeping along on tip-toe, with MOUNG TWUNI, the tracker (I had only one with me), following at my heels. The trail led through open tree jungle, and we expected to view the herd every moment. Presently we entered bamboo forest, and found more droppings; but there were still no signs of the herd, though more than once Dot had sniffed the air suspiciously. The trail now led up rising ground, and just as my eyes were level with the crest of the hill, I saw the head of a cow tsaing staring hard at me about a hundred yards off. There was a bamboo clump a few yards in front of me which completely hid the rest of the herd. I waited in breathless suspense, not daring to move hand or foot. Presently the cow took a couple of paces forward,

and stood again, staring as hard as ever. Then down went her head, but only to be raised instantly, while she again favoured me with a prolonged scrutiny. The tracker was hidden, as were also the coolies, below the crest, and all she could see of me was my brown Elwood hat. Fortunately she came no closer. At last she moved off with a quick rush, and was hidden by the bamboo clump; but as she moved, the backs—fortunately, only the backs—of two more cows came into view. In a moment I had glided to the bamboo clump, and stood on the far side of it with rifle ready, hoping when the stampede occurred, as it surely would, that the herd would bolt across my front, in the direction taken by the cow in her short rush. I had not long to wait. There was a terrific snort, and off dashed the herd right across my front. There was no mistaking the bull. I had a fleeting vision of a pair of wide-spreading horns and a dried teak-leaf coloured coat as he galloped through the undergrowth. I got my sights on to him, and then threw the rifle forward and pressed the trigger. I did not hear the bullet strike, and in far less time than it takes to tell it, the crashing through the undergrowth died away, and all was silence.

After waiting for a quarter of an hour in case, by good luck, the bull was wounded, we followed him up, and presently, to my joy, found

blood. Tracking very slowly and cautiously, after about half a mile I saw him standing in bamboo cover, with only his flank exposed. I did not dare to work round for a raking shot, but aimed carefully at his exposed quarters and fired a solid nickel. The bull dashed off at the shot, and we could hear him in the distance thundering through the undergrowth. It was now nine o'clock, and after giving him another quarter of an hour we resumed the trail in the same order as before. At 12.30 we were no nearer to him, so, as we were all feeling the need for something to eat, we sat down and had breakfast. At a quarter to one we took on the trail again, which now led into very thick cover, so dense that we could see neither to right nor left, and only a yard or two in front of us. As we crept along, bent double, I expected every moment to hear a rush on our flank, and to see the brute thundering down on us from a few yards' distance. But presently, to my relief, the trail left the cover and led through more open country. Here we found the bull had lain down, but he must have heard us moving through the thick stuff and gone on. There was no blood now; the little there had been had apparently ceased to flow. At intervals we kept meeting the tracks of the herd, which had followed the bull. Every now and then he would turn off in a fresh direction,

only to be followed again by the herd. This was curious but annoying, as there were one or two young bulls with the herd, and it was not always easy, in the thick undergrowth, to distinguish the wounded animal's tracks from those of the others.

Presently the bull's tracks separated again and led down to a stream. We crossed it, but there was no corresponding trail leading up the opposite bank. We waded up stream for some distance, and then searched everywhere along the bank, coming back to the original crossing. Where had the brute gone? It began to rain, and I was in despair lest we should lose him after all. We now tried down stream, and there were the great tracks oozing up through the muddy water! Two hundred yards farther down we found his trail ascending the opposite bank. The cunning beast had waded down stream to throw us off the trail, and had nearly succeeded in doing so. Cautiously I climbed the bank, and, following the tracks, suddenly saw him standing head on beside a bamboo clump, staring at me, not forty yards away. Only his head and the upper part of his throat were visible. In another moment he would have been off; but I was just in time to give him a solid nickel in the throat. He rushed off, but stood again a few yards farther on, evidently on his last legs. His

shoulder was exposed, into which I put a soft-nosed bullet. Still he did not drop; but dashed off again, and again stood still. Another bullet knocked him over, and stretched him bellowing and struggling on the ground. I walked up to him, and a fifth bullet put the poor beast out of pain. He was a fine old bull about twenty years old. He had lost an eye—there was nothing but the empty socket. His head, though not quite such a fine one as that of the old veteran (since the span was not so wide and the girth rather less), was sufficiently big to make the measurements worth recording.

Length.—Right horn, $27\frac{1}{4}$ in.; left horn, 27 in.

Girth.—Right horn, 14 in.; left horn, $14\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Span, $31\frac{1}{2}$ in. Tip to tip, $25\frac{1}{2}$ in.

His body measurements, taken between two uprights, were as follows :

Height from dorsal ridge to heel, $63\frac{1}{2}$ in. (15 hands $3\frac{1}{2}$ in.).

Length of body from nose to root of tail, 8 ft. 8 in. Tail, 3 ft.

Girth of foreleg close to body, $22\frac{1}{2}$ in.

My first bullet—a solid nickel—had caught him amidships, passing clean through him. The second bullet had struck the flank, but had missed the bone. It had penetrated the belly and passed out on the other side. As I looked at his huge proportions I no longer wondered at the dance he had led us; the wonder was

rather that an ill-placed bullet should have brought him to a standstill at all. It was a piece of luck that the first bullet had struck him as far forward as it did. Had it merely passed through the centre of the body, I should probably have seen the last of him.

The ears of this bull were torn to ribbons from bygone fights, in one of which he had probably lost his eye; but there were no recent scars about him. He had either ousted a rival from the herd without difficulty or, more probably, had joined a herd in which there were only young bulls too wise to dispute his supremacy. The curious thing about the whole incident was the pertinacious way in which the herd had stuck to him, rather reversing the usual order of things. We found, by the way, the tracks of the herd again where the bull fell. It must have been close by when he was finally overtaken and killed, having probably crossed the stream higher up. It was 8.30 A.M. when I fired the first shot, and 2.30 P.M. when he was killed. So much for a badly placed bullet!

This was a most satisfactory termination to a successful shoot, and cleared up incontestably a mooted point which had troubled me for many a day. If anyone after this still believes that solitary bulls are always solitary, I can only say to him what the lawyer said to

a stranger who accosted him with the remark, 'I believe I am speaking to Mr. Jones?' 'Sir,' said the lawyer, whose name was Smith, 'if you believe that, I have no hesitation in saying you would believe anything!'

CHAPTER IV

THE TWO-HORNED RHINOCEROS (RHINOCEROS
LASIOTIS AND R. SUMATRENSIS)

(*Burmese, 'Kyan': pronounced 'Chān'*)

THIS, dear reader, is going to be a very short chapter, not so much because I am afraid of boring you (though that would be all-sufficient cause), as for another reason, which involves such an awful confession that I hardly like to make it. However, the brutal truth will out; so here goes. I have never shot a rhino; nay, more, I have never even *seen* one, outside a zoo. But I have been after them more than once, and I can at least give you a general idea of the animal's habits, of where *not* to go, and the best time of year in which to follow them, and so, perhaps, save you the long, fruitless journeys after them which I have myself experienced.

I do not propose to give a description of a beast I have never seen, so will merely state that in Burma there are no less than three species, viz. the smaller one-horned rhinoceros

(*R. sondaicus*), so called to distinguish it from the 'great one-horned rhinoceros' (*R. unicornis Indicus*), which is only found in Assam, and two species of the two-horned rhinoceros (*R. lasiotis* and *R. sumatrensis*). It is this last beast which is generally met with in Burma, *R. sondaicus* being very rarely found, probably owing to its inhabiting the dense and almost impenetrable jungles of Lower Burma, Tenasserim and Tavoy. *R. lasiotis* is found, I believe, only in Tenasserim and Arracan. It is satisfactory to know that *R. sumatrensis*, which is the smallest of the lot, and the most hairy, possesses a considerably longer horn (the front one) than that of any other species. Two horns in the British Museum measure respectively 32 in. and 27 in., with a girth of 17 in. The back horn is often merely a knob. In the female both horns are apparently quite short.

The difficulty in bagging a rhino in Burma lies not so much in the rarity of the beast as in his habits, or, to speak more correctly, his habitat. They are extremely local, and unless you can, so to speak, put your finger on a spot known to hold them, you may wander countless miles over the most likely ground without your eyes being gladdened by the sight of even an old track. Hunting rhino in Burma is, in fact, something like hunting serow, except that the latter beast is more widely distributed, and so is easier found.

It is a great deal a matter of luck. *R. sumatrensis* lives in the hills, far from the haunts of man. They are great wanderers, and places which at certain times of the year are a sure find for rhino, will at other seasons be absolutely barren. From all accounts, if one can only strike their immediate locality, one may meet with quite a number, comparatively speaking, of these antediluvian beasts within a radius of a few miles. Mr. Thom, of the Burma Police, whose book is mentioned in my preface, saw three in one day in the Ruby Mines district, and accounted for two, having shot a rhino a few days previously on the same range of hills. With accurate information as to where to go, with good trackers, and with plenty of time at one's disposal, say a couple of months, one ought to make certain of bagging a rhino in Burma. The two most likely localities are the Ruby Mines district and the Shan States; but, certainly in the latter country, one would have to go a very long way, involving a journey of several weeks' duration from the time of leaving Toungyi—the head quarters of the Southern Shan States. Success, supposing one to have been fortunate in securing good trackers (not always a certainty), would then depend almost entirely on the accuracy of the information one had obtained beforehand; not necessarily as to the exact whereabouts of the animals, but of the locality

known to contain them. Given a range of hills which rhinos are known to inhabit, and a general idea of the direction to take when you get there, the chances are that before long you will come on their tracks. But do not be persuaded, as I was, to visit localities *said* to hold rhino on the off-chance of meeting them. You want something better than this to go on. Above all, do not, if you are wise, make a special journey to some particular spot which, you are assured, contains a single beast or a pair of rhinos without first having made practically certain that you will find them there. This you can only do by getting reliable information that they have been seen there comparatively recently, and have not been disturbed.

When shooting in Burma I made three separate expeditions after rhino—twice into independent territory and once in Burma proper. But my time was limited, and being on each occasion disappointed in not finding rhino where I had expected to meet with them, I was obliged to return without making a prolonged search. The first place I tried was on the Upper Chindwin. I started from Tamanthi, a small military-police post, the farthest north of the posts on the Chindwin. I had obtained a rough sketch map of the ground to work over from a man who had shot a rhino there two years previously. He was not after them at the time, but came on

fresh tracks quite unexpectedly. He assured me that tracks were plentiful, and that the place was a sure find. I started up a stream, the NOUNGMO CHOUNG, flowing into the CHINDWIN two miles above TAMANTHI, and hunted for ten days over every yard of country I had been directed to. I then struck into independent territory, but was obliged to return after a few days, as my Burmans refused to accompany me farther. The country was inhabited by wild CHINS, who used occasionally to come down and raid the villages in the CHINDWIN. Not a sign of a rhino did I see on that trip, not even an old track.

My next attempt was made from MINGIN—also a post on the CHINDWIN, but considerably farther south. On this occasion also, before starting, I received special information as to where to go, and was positively assured by my trackers that we would find rhino. It was in the hot weather, and I set out full of hope. But I returned a sadder and a wiser man, having seen never a rhino nor the signs of one. I did, however, shoot a bison and a bear.

My third and last trip after rhino was made from TAMMU, on the MANIPUR border. Here it was not a case of one or two beasts having been located a year or so previously; but I was making for regular rhino country in independent territory. I had excellent trackers with me

who knew the country and were very sanguine of finding rhino. To make a long story short, I travelled for ten days over practically virgin ground; but though I hunted high and low, I only once found tracks of rhino, and those were three weeks old. The beasts had evidently forsaken that line of country for the time being. I did, however, get bison, and once came on a pair of tigers spooning in a nullah; but they were off before I could get a shot.

This, then, is my experience of hunting rhino in Burma, and, as the reader may see, it was not a happy one. But I was undoubtedly unlucky, and was handicapped, moreover, in being unable to make a really long journey to ranges which *R. sumatrensis* has selected as his permanent habitat.

As regards the best time of year during which to hunt rhino, I should say the months of April and May are the most suitable. A rhino lives in very dense jungle, and in the cold weather the hunter would be greatly handicapped by the thick undergrowth. It would be quite impossible to travel about in heavy jungle during the rains. In the hot weather, the rhinoceros, from all accounts, spends most of the day in mud wallows, which, when found, afford a clue to the animal's approximate whereabouts should the wallow itself be deserted for the time being. Tracking, of course, in the hot weather is sure

to be difficult; but with decent trackers the beast will probably be found eventually, and, apparently, it makes little difference how much time is wasted in trying to pick out the trail, since the animal can be shot just as easily when lying up in a wallow as when he is feeding. Mr. Thom remarks on the peculiar humming noise a rhino makes when wallowing, and says that it can be heard for a considerable distance.

CHAPTER V

THE TIGER (FELIS TIGRIS) (*Burmese*, 'Kya': pronounced 'Chā'). THE PANTHER OR LEOPARD (FELIS PARDUS) (*Burmese*, 'Thit')

BOTH these animals are so well known, and their habits and general appearance have been so often described in print, that I do not propose to weary the reader with an unnecessary description of either, more especially since neither in appearance nor habits do they differ in any degree from their congeners in India. The only difference in habit that I have ever heard of is that the tiger in Burma is said occasionally to take a dog if tied up as a bait, exactly as a panther does. But this is mere hearsay. I have never known an instance of a tiger killing a dog for food, whether as a bait or otherwise, and should doubt his doing so. Possibly, in reported cases of the kind, the tracks of a large panther have been mistaken for those of a tiger. I do, however, know of an authenticated case in which a tiger in Burma attacked a full-grown tame elephant. The unfortunate beast, a female

belonging to the Forest Department, was hobbled and turned into the jungle at night to feed, as is the custom in Burma with tame elephants. The tiger sprang on to her quarters, and literally feasted on the poor thing while alive, tearing huge chunks of meat from her flanks and quarters, probably springing on to her again and again after being shaken off, and biting out a huge mouthful of flesh each time. Whether the elephant at last succeeded in getting rid of her terrible assailant, or whether the tiger, having satisfied its hunger, slunk away to digest its meal, is not known. The elephant was found still on her legs next morning, but almost dead from loss of blood and pain, and succumbed to her injuries during the day.

It is somewhat curious that in the dense, uninhabited forests of Burma, untrodden by man from year's end to year's end, except when visited at rare intervals by some adventurous sahib, both tigers and panthers should so seldom be met with. One would suppose that in such places, where both tigers and leopards abound, they would be met with fairly often in the early morning or evening. But though fresh tracks of both will be found daily, the animals themselves are rarely seen. They are just as wary as in the more frequented forests. I do not think this is owing to an instinctive fear of man; for in such out-of-the-way places they have

probably never seen a human being. It would appear rather as if they hid from the sight of other animals, instinct teaching them that to make themselves conspicuous in the daytime would result in their going without a meal at night. That this is so seems to be borne out by the fact that when either a tiger or panther is met with in one of these distant spots, it evinces no fear of man; but boldly stares at the intruder, eventually quietly taking itself off.

In several years of wandering, off and on, in the forests of Burma at all seasons, I only remember to have met tigers twice and a leopard once. On one occasion I was steaming up the Chindwin on a Government stern-wheeler. I was at breakfast at the time, when a shout from a lascar brought me outside. Looking up the river, I saw a large tiger drinking on the bank about 200 yards ahead of us. The steamer was slowed down, and I rushed into the cabin for rifle and cartridges, returning just in time to see the tiger disappear into the dense jungle, the brute having taken alarm at the steamer and the churning of the paddle. Had I been in a country boat I might have got a shot.

Another time I was following bison when one of the trackers stopped suddenly and said 'thit' (leopard). There was nothing to be seen—the beast had vanished. But on going some twenty yards or so farther on, we came to a

waterfall tumbling from some rocks in a ravine. Instinctively I pulled up to have a look ; it was just the place for a panther to lie up in. While glancing about, I suddenly caught sight of what looked like the upper part of the head and the two ears of a panther sticking out of the long grass on the hillside some forty yards or so above us. But it might have been the stump of a tree. Not wishing to disturb the ground unnecessarily, I had recourse to my binoculars, and as soon as I had got the glasses on the spot, saw that my first impression was correct. There was the panther sitting staring at us, its body concealed in the grass but nose and ears visible. I handed the glasses to the tracker, and brought the rifle to my shoulder ; but before I could draw a bead on the beast, it had slunk away in the long grass. I climbed the hill after it, hoping to find it looking at us again ; but it had vanished for good.

The other occasion was when after rhino in independent territory. It was very confusing at the time. We had just crossed early in the morning a broad stream with dense jungle on either bank, when we heard what we took to be the trumpeting of elephants on the opposite bank about 300 yards farther down. I had no doubt in my mind as to the noise being made by elephants, nor had my trackers—both experienced men who had been after elephants times without

number. I unloaded the rifle and substituted two solid nickel cartridges for the soft-nosed bullets which were in the chamber, and retraced my steps, intending to walk down the choung, which was almost dry, and to enter the jungle on the opposite bank. As we got into the choung the trumpeting ceased ; but we knew where to make for, and expected to hear it again in a few minutes. I was clambering over the boulders followed by my orderly, the two trackers being behind. We were going rather carelessly, not expecting for a moment to see anything in the choung itself. Suddenly the orderly clutched my shoulder and whispered, 'Sher, dum dekkha' ('Tiger, I saw its tail'). The orderly was standing on a boulder at the time, while I was just below. I opened the rifle hastily and extracted the two nickel cartridges, which would have been useless on tiger ; but while I was fumbling in my pocket for the soft-nosed ones, the orderly, in his excitement, foolishly jumped on to another boulder, to get a better view, and alarmed the tigers—a pair—which, with a roar, bounded out from behind a boulder some twenty yards ahead and disappeared leisurely, one behind the other, into the jungle, leaving me to watch the performance with an empty rifle. Had the orderly kept his head and crept down beside me I must have got an easy shot at one, if not at both, as, until he showed himself, they were quite unconscious

of our presence. Even now it did not occur to me that the strange noises we had heard were made by the tigers, and it was not until we had gone another hundred yards without hearing further trumpeting, or the breaking of branches, that it began to dawn on the trackers and myself that the elephants existed only in our imagination. This was by no means my first interview with tigers; moreover, I had often heard them roar, both when mating and when in search of food, and once heard a tiger roaring at intervals throughout the day from early morning until four in the afternoon, when he killed a cow; but never before or since have I heard tigers make such an extraordinary noise as this pair were creating. I can only describe it by saying that it was exactly like the loud trumpet of an elephant, ending almost in a squeak. We all know how cats can caterwaul on the housetop, and it was evident that we had interrupted this pair of tigers in a serious flirtation. No wonder the row had deceived us! I am quite sure that if I ever heard it again on elephant ground, when not expecting to see a tiger, I should again be taken in.

One does not hear of many man-eaters in Burma. Occasionally one is met with in the remoter parts of the country; but, probably from lack of opportunity, they seem to kill human beings at long intervals only. There used to be

a brute near Tammu, on the Manipur border, which had accounted for several Burmans during the course of many years. This tiger filled up the intervals by killing cattle. I had many a try for him, but never had the luck to get a shot, and am told he is still at large. On one occasion this beast pursued a party of three Burmans who were paddling down the Yu stream, a tributary of the Chindwin. The men suddenly became aware of a tiger galloping through the jungle on the bank, and keeping level with them. He presently took to the water, and swam after the boat; but finding that he was losing ground, made for the opposite bank and resumed his tactics, plunging into the water again as he caught them up. He kept this game up for two or three miles, and then desisted, finding his efforts in vain. If he had had the sense to gallop ahead of the boat, and then take to the water, he must have caught them, unless they could have chopped him over the head with a 'dah' as he attempted to scramble into the boat; but this was only a dug-out, and would probably have upset during the struggle.

On another occasion this brute carried off a sahib's Madrassi boy ten miles from Tammu, on tsaing ground. Master had shouted for dinner and received the usual reply, 'Bringing sar.' After waiting for some little time, and no dinner appearing, his master called again, and getting

no answer, left his tent to investigate. The unfortunate boy's 'puggri' on the path, lying across the fragments of a broken soup-plate, left no doubt as to what had happened. Master went supperless that night, but not to bed, and returned to the village early next morning. Whether the boy's remains were ever found history does not relate. While encamped on this spot some years later, I believe I nearly ran up against this very tiger. I had left my tent before dawn one morning, and was surprised by the sound as of a heavy beast bounding in the jungle close to the path. It was not a deer: there were two distinct thuds as of a tiger or panther bounding. I made record time back to the tent, and when it got a little lighter, set out again to examine a 'quin' for tsaing, accompanied by the moksoh, and followed by an elephant, intending, if unsuccessful in finding tsaing, to mount the elephant and try for a shot at sambur, of which there were a good number in the surrounding jungle. Arrived near the 'quin,' I halted the elephant and crept on with the moksoh. The 'quin' was deserted, so I returned to the elephant, and found the mahout in a great state of excitement. He told me, that just after I had left, a huge tiger walked out into the path, and stood there staring for over a minute at the elephant, not twenty yards away. Having satisfied his curiosity, he strolled

on into the jungle as leisurely as he had arrived. I went to the spot pointed out by the mahout, and there, sure enough, were the pugs of a huge tiger. This was probably my friend of the early morning; but whether he was the man-eater or not I had no means of ascertaining. I followed at once on the elephant, but saw nothing of the tiger; so returned to camp, after bagging a sambur stag.

Leopards are as much a nuisance in Burma as they are in India. They are always prowling round villages, and carrying off dogs and cattle. I once had a favourite fox terrier carried off by a leopard, almost at my feet as I sat at dinner in a zayat. The jungles in Burma are so thick, and so vast, that driving for tiger or leopard, even if you could get the Burman to beat for them, would be useless. It occasionally happens, however, that when beating for sambur and barking deer, a tiger or panther unexpectedly presents himself. The few tigers killed in Burma are usually got by sitting over kills. Burmans are clever at making traps for leopards, and account for a good many in this way. The clouded panther is occasionally killed in the denser forests. I saw the skin of one shot by a Sepoy at a remote post on the Upper Chindwin. The colouring was beautiful—the black rosettes showing distinctly on the chocolate-coloured background.



BURMESE SEROW
(*Nemorhædus Sumatrensis*)

CHAPTER VI

THE MALAY BEAR (*URSUS MALAYANUS*) (*Burmese*, 'Wūn' or 'Wet-wūn'). THE BURMESE SEROW (*NEMORHÆDUS SUMATRENSIS*) (*Burmese*, 'Taw-seik')

I HAVE taken these totally dissimilar animals together because their habits differ in no wise from the Indian species, and neither, therefore, calls for a lengthy notice. The bear most commonly found in Burma, though nowhere plentiful, is the ordinary black bear of the Himalayas (*Ursus torquatus* or *U. thibetanus*). The sloth-bear (*U. labiatus*) does not appear to exist in Burma.

The Malay bear is not often met with. It seems to keep to secluded spots and heavy jungle, and is probably more often found in the dense forests of Tenasserim and Lower Burma than elsewhere. Its habits are identical with those of the common black bear, though Burmans assert that it is more ferocious than the larger species, and will frequently attack on sight. This reputation probably arises from the

fact that, owing to the thick jungle in which he lives, he is very likely to be suddenly surprised at close quarters by unwary bamboo-cutters, under circumstances in which the Himalayan black bear would be equally likely to attack, as many a native of India can testify.

In size the Malay bear is the smallest of the bear tribe, averaging about four feet in length, and weighing from sixty to a hundred pounds. He differs from the common black bear in having a very short, thick coat, and the horse-shoe on the chest orange coloured instead of white.

The Burmese serow has also exactly the same habits as the Indian species. He is found in the same densely wooded ravines and in the same sort of hills, at any elevation from about 2000 to 8000 feet, being, perhaps, more plentiful in the Pakokku Chin Hills and the Arracan Hill Tracts than elsewhere. He is difficult to stalk owing to the nature of his habitat; but is easily driven, particularly downhill. The Burmese serow is smaller than the Indian species and more rufous in colouring, the horns averaging about 8 in. or 9 in. in length.

As the serow, whether in India or Burma, is a solitary animal, only found singly or in pairs, and very sparsely distributed, a short description of the beast may not be out of place. In appearance he is half donkey, half

goat—the Burmese species standing about 36 in. at the shoulder, while the Himalayan serow measures a few inches higher. He is heavily built on sturdy, goat-like legs. But for all his ungainly appearance, few animals can make better time down a steep, thickly wooded hillside than the serow. The head and neck are rufous in the Burmese species, with a few grey hairs in an old animal. The muzzle and chin are grey. A heavy crest of hair extends from the back of the neck to the withers. The back is greyish black, the sides and inner portions of the limbs being chestnut. The horns are black, curved backwards, and are generally ringed from the base upwards to about half their length. They may, however, be almost smooth throughout their length. An old male shot by the writer in the Himalayas had horns $10\frac{1}{2}$ in. in length with hardly a ring on them. In good specimens the girth of the horns at the base measures from 5 in. to 6 in. The horns of the female are generally shorter than those of the male, with a lesser girth. The eye is black and piggy-looking, and is in keeping with the general uncouth appearance of the beast.

The serow is said to charge when wounded, and a case is on record of an unwounded male, whose mate had been killed, suddenly charging out of the bushes and rolling the sportsman's

shikari down the hill while he was stooping over the dead animal. I knew a shikari whose small terrier, after helping to bring several serow to bay, was eventually killed by a wounded one ; and once a wounded serow, which had taken cover in a bush growing in a ravine, rushed out at me on receiving a second shot. I had only just time to jump aside as the animal passed, and to give him another bullet in the back as he went by. Whether he meant business or was merely 'flummoxed,' I have never to this day been able to decide.

Serow, in spite of being shy, are rather stupid beasts. I remember shooting a female which, when fired at, slowly walked out from behind a bush and stood in the open. After receiving two more bullets it turned round to retrace its steps ; but before it could manage to do so, a fourth shot tumbled it head over heels down the khud. On another occasion a serow was tracked up and found lying down under the shade of a tree. At the shot it stood up, and then walked forward for a few paces, only to stand stock still and allow itself to be easily killed. When, however, a serow makes up its mind to travel, nothing will stop it.

When serow have taken up their quarters in a particular ravine they will stand a lot of badgering before they leave it. If an animal is seen and fired at, he will, if unwounded, generally



GOORAL
(*Nemorhædus Goral*)

be found in nearly the same spot a day or two later; while if driven and missed the beast will keep at the bottom of the ravine (if he has been driven downhill) for a few days, returning higher up in course of time. Similarly, if driven uphill, he will remain at the head of the glen, coming down again when he has got over his scare. If the ravine is a small one, he will probably be found later on in an adjoining one. So that if a serow can be located he is not a difficult beast to get a shot at. But he is so scarce, and sticks to such thick cover, that finding one is generally a matter of luck.

Gooral are also found in Burma in suitable localities, such as the Arracan Hill Tracts and Pakokku Chin Hills, but they are by no means plentiful. The colouring appears to be much lighter than in the Himalayan animal. A buck shot by the writer in the Chin Hills had a light grey coat rather like the colouring of a lungoor monkey.

CHAPTER VII

THE MALAYAN SAMBUR (CERVUS EQUINUS) (*Burmese, 'Sat'*)

THIS fine animal is very similar to the Indian sambur in general appearance and size, but the horns are quite different. The plate in Rowland Ward's book of horn measurements shows the difference distinctly. The horns of the Malayan sambur grow close together, and are sometimes not much wider at the tips than they are at the base. They are considerably shorter than those of the Indian sambur, but are usually thicker. The brow antler does not stand out from the skull as in the Indian species, but grows upwards at an acute angle, and is often very long. Occasionally one meets with specimens of the Malayan sambur in which the brow antler is actually longer than the beam from which it springs. Compared to the Indian sambur the head has a stunted appearance, as if the owner habitually lived in dense jungle where wide-spreading horns would be a nuisance.



MALAYAN SAMBUR

(*Cervus Equinus*)

This is, in fact, the case. A peculiarity about the Malayan sambur is, that an animal shot in the hills generally has a better head all round than one living in the plains at the foot of the hills. Why this should be I do not know, since the jungle on the hills is frequently as dense as that at the foot, and often more so, and the feeding is equally good in either. Though there is no question that the head of the Indian sambur is the handsomer of the two, still a really good head of *C. equinus* is not to be despised. The rugged horns, with their big girth and long brow antlers, look all the more massive for being close together. I have seen some with a girth of quite 12 in. Unfortunately, however, good heads of the Malayan sambur are rare. Not one in twenty has a length exceeding 30 in. A good average head is one of about 27 in. in length, with a girth of from 7 in. to 9 in.

If anything, the Malayan sambur is even more nocturnal than his Indian cousin. At all events, he is seldom seen in the daytime. He is a shy beast, and avoids the vicinity of man, being generally found on bison ground, which appears to suit his requirements to a nicety. He is occasionally met with in the very early morning, and when seen a little way off can be stalked with comparative ease. His sight is poor compared to that of most deer; nor does

his sense of hearing appear to be particularly acute, except when lying up—a time when all beasts are very much on the alert. Old stags, like the Indian sambur, are often solitary; but I am inclined to think that, with the exception of those whose horns are dwindling from age, and who are therefore out of the running, so to speak, these animals rejoin their herds during the rutting season, or, at all events, attach themselves to another herd. The horns are usually shed about April, but occasionally old stags retain their horns for two seasons or more. The rut commences about November and continues throughout the cold weather. The young, sometimes two at a birth, are born during the latter part of the rains. The only difference the writer has been able to notice between the Indian sambur and *C. equinus* is in the colour of the coat. The Malayan sambur appears to be the darker of the two. I have shot old stags almost black in colour—much darker than any I have seen in India.

There is one peculiarity about the sambur, whether *C. unicolor* or *C. equinus*, which has seldom been noticed, and yet is so striking that it calls for some remark. I allude to the raw spot half way up on the throat, perfectly circular in shape, and always in the same place. It is common to no other deer that I know of, but every wild sambur has it, whether stag,

hind or calf.¹ It begins as a spot from which the hair has been rubbed about the size of a four-anna piece. This increases in size until, in full-grown animals, it has a diameter of about four inches. The original spot now becomes a bleeding sore in the centre of a large circle the size of a saucer; this large circular patch has a bare rather than a raw appearance, the hair being completely rubbed away, though the skin, except at the central spot, is not actually broken. In full-grown animals the central spot may be as large as a penny. Indian and Burmese shikaris have an explanation for this; but a somewhat inadequate one. They say the sambur is attacked by a parasite, and the sore is caused by the animal rubbing itself to get relief from the irritation. This no doubt is true so far as it goes; but they are quite unable to explain why sambur should invariably be attacked in exactly the same place, why the sore should be as circular as if it were made with a pair of compasses, and why sambur alone of all deer should be so afflicted. I do not myself believe in the rubbing theory. If the beast

¹ Since writing the above I paid a visit to the Zoological Gardens in Calcutta, which contain a good number of sambur. But I was unable to detect the blood-spot in any of the sambur there. It would appear, therefore, that the parasite is found in the long grass growing in the sambur's habitat, and that it adheres to the animal's skin as he forces his way through the undergrowth.

rubbed itself against a tree or branch to get rid of the irritation, it would do so with an up-and-down motion, and the result would be irregular scratches along the throat. But strange to say, in spite of the forbidding appearance of the sore, sambur do not appear to be at all inconvenienced by it. I have watched sambur when out in the open, both in India and Burma, for half an hour or more at a time, on purpose to see whether the animals rubbed the sore; but I never saw any sambur, whether young or old, pay the slightest attention to it. That the disfigurement is caused by a peculiar parasite which only attacks the sambur is quite certain; but why it should invariably confine its attentions to the throat, or why it should make a complete circle, and having done so, desist from further attack, I know not. Judging by the bleeding spot in the centre of the circle, it looks as if the parasite, having reached its limits, returned to the original spot and fed there, since it is, in full-grown animals, always quite raw, the remainder of the circle being merely bare and pink-looking. Seen in the early dawn this raw spot has quite a gruesome appearance. At what age the calves are attacked I do not know, but I have seen the spot distinctly on quite young calves, not more than a month or two old.

The reason, I think, why this should not

have been more generally remarked lies in the fact that hinds and calves are not, as a rule, observed very closely, and in the stag the spot is just below where the sportsman cuts the neck skin for the mask, supposing him to have taken plenty of 'neck.' In fact, in the stag the spot is a good guide as to the amount of 'neck' to take. Cut just above it, and you will have more than sufficient. No doubt many a man has noticed this peculiar spot, and has wondered vaguely, as I have myself, what has caused it; but thinking it peculiar to the individual beast he has just shot, and that probably it was caused by the animal running up against a pointed bamboo or similar obstacle, he has not bothered his head for further evidence. By the time he has shot his next sambur, perhaps a year or so later, he has forgotten all about it. I remember when walking up to the first sambur stag I shot, I thought at first that my bullet had hit him in the throat, and only realised that it was not so when I had turned him over and found the bullet-wound on the point of the shoulder where I had aimed. If any sportsman should be inclined to doubt my statement as to this blemish on a sambur's throat, I can only say let him examine carefully the very next sambur he shoots; and if he doesn't find a large, bare circular scar on its throat, with a blood-red spot in the centre of it,

I will eat my words served up with sambur sauce ! Can I say more ?

In Burma the best way to get sambur, when it can be managed, is from an elephant. Very few places admit of stalking them on foot. Driving for sambur is in Burma a hopeless business. He lives in such dense cover, and in such long grass, that the beaters have great difficulty in forcing their way through. The extent of forest, too, makes it impossible to say where the animals will break cover. Add to this the idiosyncrasies of the Burman villager, who has about as much idea of organised beating as a cow, and it will be seen that the game is not worth the candle. Moreover, since sambur are generally found on good bison ground, by beating you risk disturbing nobler game. The sambur I have shot in Burma have been obtained either from elephant back, or when coming across them unexpectedly in the early morning while after bison.



BROW-ANTLERED DEER

(*Cervus Eldi*)

CHAPTER VIII

THE BROW-ANTLERED DEER (CERVUS ELDI) (*Burmese, 'Thamin'*)

THIS is the typical stag of Burma, and a very handsome one he is. In point of beauty the writer puts him next to the barasingh of Kashmir, being of the opinion that he beats even the cheetul. The thamin used to be very numerous throughout the dry zone, and though he is still fairly plentiful in certain localities, his numbers have sadly dwindled during the last decade, while the size of his horns has decreased likewise. This is partly due to the country having become more opened out; but is chiefly owing to the unremitting persecution he receives at the hands of Europeans and natives alike. The poor thamin, like the cheap gun or rifle, is within the reach of all. Not only does he fall a victim to the sportsman who traverses the greater portion of the district with the intention of securing a few really good heads, but every volunteer armed with a magazine rifle, every subordinate in Government employ

who can run to a sixty-rupee weapon, and every native of India or Burma who carries a gun licence (besides many who do not) has a whack at the unfortunate thamin. Nor are his troubles at an end even now, for he is constantly being hunted by dogs; whole villages turning out for the fun. It is true they don't often catch him; but they chase and harry him none the less. Nearly every newcomer to Burma, though he may not care particularly about sport in general, feels he must have a go at thamin before he leaves the country. Needless to say that not only is a large number of legitimate heads secured, but, in addition, a goodly proportion of animals bite the dust at whom a rifle should never have been pointed. I should like to see the game laws of Burma amended, particularly as regards thamin. A thirty-rupee licence for shooting big game, in which four thamin stags per sportsman were included, would do a great deal towards preserving these beautiful creatures. And all hunting with dogs should be made strictly illegal. The Burman hunts chiefly for hares; but in doing so he scours the whole country and terrifies the deer, which break up into small detached parties and scatter in all directions

The thamin stands about 45 in. at the shoulder; that is, about three inches lower than the barasingh, and about ten lower than

the sambur. Old stags are generally dark in colour, sometimes almost black. The hair is coarse, and there is a thick mane about the neck. They grow somewhat lighter in colour with the hot weather, but do not seem to shed their coat. The does are a light fawn colour, and are smaller in comparison with the size of the stag than most deer. In the distance a group of does look just like the does of black buck, and are as hard to distinguish in a bright light. The young are spotted. The head of a thamin stag is very handsome. It is long and narrow, the horns, almost touching at the base, sweep backwards and outwards, coming forward again so as to form a semicircle. But the chief peculiarity about the head of this deer, and one from which it gets its name, is that the brow antler, instead of growing at an angle from the beam as in all other deer, comes forward in one continuous curve; so that the effect, when seen in profile, is that of an almost complete circle. There is usually a false point on the axle, and one or two on the brow antler, which is extremely long. There is generally also a point, from about six to nine inches long, close to the top of each beam, which may be destitute of further points, or may split up into several. One of the finest thamin I ever shot had only six points, including the brow antler. The curved beam ended in long white tips, as sharp

almost as the point of a spear. Another very fine head had as many as fourteen points; but the six-pointer was, none the less, the finer of the two. The horns vary in colour almost as much as in appearance. Some are a beautiful golden brown with white tips. Others are a bluish grey in colour, and you get every shade between these two extremes. The tips of the brow antler, and of the points, are, however, always white, as is the case with all deer when the stag is a fine one.

As regards length, the horn is always measured to exclude the brow antler. This is fair enough; but since half the beauty of a thamin's head lies in the brow antler, it would, in the case of this deer alone, be more satisfactory, I think, if the length of the brow antler were always mentioned. A head measuring 35 in., with a brow antler of 17 in., is, in my opinion, a more handsome trophy than one measuring 38 in., with a brow antler of only 14 in. Heads measuring 42 in. and over, exclusive of the brow tine, have been shot; but these are very rare, especially nowadays. The biggest head that has fallen to the writer measures $37\frac{1}{2}$ in., with a brow antler of $17\frac{1}{2}$ in. I should call one of about 34 in., with a brow antler of 12 or 13 in., a good average head. Any beast with a head less than 30 in. ought not to be fired at. It is wonderful, by the way, how,

with a little practice, the size of a head can be judged almost to an inch.

I have said that the horns of thamin appear to have decreased in size. This is no doubt partly due to the large number of good heads which have been bagged; but chiefly, I think, owing to the preponderance of does. The thamin in Burma suffer at present from this cause to the same extent as the oorial in the Punjab. For this the game laws, framed with the best intentions, are responsible. Sound in other respects, they are no longer applicable to thamin. As they stand at present, there is no limit to the number of thamin which may be killed, nor any specification as to the size of the head, nor is there any charge for shooting them. But the shooting of females is strictly prohibited. Many a man, therefore, who is no sportsman at heart, goes out after thamin with the hope of shooting a good stag; but with the fixed determination to shoot something rather than return empty-handed. He knows he is within the letter of the law if he kills anything with horns, however small. So when he finds that no big stag presents himself, he blazes off at the first animal he sees with horns, and drives back to the zayat in his bullock-cart with a wretched little beast of twenty inches, and perhaps more than one, packed away in the cart behind him; whereas he had much

better have shot a couple of does. If, for the next two years, the Local Government would limit the number of stag heads to four, none to be shot without a game licence costing Rs.30, to include big game of all kinds except elephants, and would permit two thamin does to be shot by the licence-holder in addition to the stags, we should soon see an increase in the number of shootable heads, as well as an improvement in their quality. When the does became reduced to their normal proportion as intended by Nature, orders forbidding their destruction might again be brought into force. Game laws on these lines would benefit Government and the sportsman alike. The thirty-rupee licence might include permission to shoot big game in reserved forests.

It may be urged that such game laws would be difficult to enforce. But much more stringent ones are in force throughout most parts of India, and are, generally speaking, strictly observed. In India practically the only person who habitually infringes them is the native shikari, who shoots for the pot and to sell the skin and horns. These men are often in the pay of local taxidermists. But in Burma few villagers have guns, or the means of obtaining them, whether on hire or loan. And as villages in the dry zone are always being visited by Government officials, hunting with dogs could

only be done surreptitiously and on rare occasions. If the matter were taken up in reported cases, one or two examples would have a very deterrent effect. Sportsmen generally could certainly be trusted not to exceed the limit of four stags and two does, and it is pretty certain that only good heads would be shot. A man who is limited to four stags, especially if he has had to pay for the privilege of shooting them, is hardly likely to shoot immature animals; at all events, he cannot shoot many. It does not seem to the writer sound that the charge for the licence should be less than thirty rupees. This sum would not deter the keen sportsman, however humble his position; but it *would* prevent a host of subordinates, white and black alike, going after thamin, either for meat or for the pleasure of bowling them over regardless of the size of their heads. This is the type of man from whom above all others it is necessary to protect the deer. The licence-holder would, of course, use his discretion in the matter of shooting does. To shoot them would afford him no earthly satisfaction, and in some localities he might find it undesirable even to shoot one. In others they might be so numerous as to make shooting two not only desirable but necessary.

While on the subject of game laws, there is one other point with regard to thamin which I

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should like to bring forward. As the laws stand at present for Burma, no males of deer, barking deer excepted, are permitted to be shot *in reserved forests* between June 15 and October 15. I take it, that the insertion 'in reserved forests' is intended to protect villagers from ravages by deer on their crops. This is quite sound except in the case of thamin. If we except the barking deer, the only others are sambur and hog deer, and if the villager occasionally nets or shoots one or the other he is doing no harm to anyone. But thamin do not shed their horns till August, and they are not entirely free from velvet till the middle or end of January. Therefore, would it not be as well to make the close season for thamin from August 1, or earlier, to February 1, omitting the words 'in reserved forests' and making an exception in the case of villagers whose crops thamin are in the habit of visiting? I know for a fact that many beats take place both for thamin and barking deer in the late rains in the dry zone, and many a stag in velvet falls a victim at this season. Let the villager sit on his 'teh' at night, by all means, and pot thamin whenever he finds them in his fields; but beating for deer when in velvet is quite another matter. I have written at length on the subject of the present game laws for Burma at the risk of being tedious, because I feel it is imperative that some steps should be taken, and that quickly,

for the better preservation of one of the most interesting species of Burmese fauna. In the matter of game we are adepts at shutting the stable-door after the horse has gone, and with the example of Kashmir before our eyes, to say nothing of America and South Africa, we cannot afford to be lax in the matter.

Thamin are generally shot from bullock-carts, and in many places this is the only method in which they can be approached. It is not that their power of sight, keen as it is, is so good as to prevent their being approached on foot. But they are generally found in open bush, which is, nevertheless, both sufficiently high and thick to effectually conceal them from a man on foot. They are particularly partial to 'zebu' jungle, a stunted species of plum, on the leaves and berries of which they feed greedily; and even from a cart they are often invisible until one is quite close. I have tried in such jungle stalking them from pony back. As soon as one dismounts the animals are hidden, and in endeavouring to get near them one is sure to be spotted by some keen-sighted doe, who gives the alarm and off goes the herd.

When thamin are found in the open it is very interesting stalking them on foot. They are extremely wary, and seldom allow a man within a hundred yards. But a good stag secured in this legitimate manner is worth twenty such

beasts potted from a bullock-cart. They are so used to villagers driving their carts along the tracts which intersect their feeding-grounds in all directions that, unless much shot at, they will stand and stare while the cart, perhaps, gets to within twenty yards of the unsuspecting creatures. No wonder many of them are killed ! Personally, I don't like the bullock-cart method, and as, owing to the thick scrub, it is frequently impossible to get near them on foot, I combine the three methods of pony-back, bullock-cart and stalking, and find I get quite enough legitimate shooting to satisfy my wants. My plan is as follows. I take a bullock-cart, which goes on a little ahead of me, while I ride a confidential 'tat' in the rear. I find, from the advantage in height which riding confers, that one is often able to spot a herd before the occupants of the cart can possibly see it. They have, however, the advantage of being in front. As soon as the deer are seen, a Burman gets out of the cart and walks beside the pony. As I get within a couple of hundred yards or so, I take advantage of a bush to slip off my pony and hand it to the Burman, with instructions to follow the cart at about 200 yards' distance. It is often lost to his view, but Burmans are good at following wheel-tracks, and never seem to miss the way. I then walk on the off-side of the cart, and when I get within a hundred yards or

so, drop behind as the cart passes behind a bush, and wait for the chance of a shot. It is, of course, easier if taken sitting; but very often this prevents a view of the herd. Meanwhile the cart goes on slowly, keeping more or less in a straight line, sufficiently near to the thamin to attract their attention without setting them off. Presently up go their heads, and they stare hard at the cart. If luck favours one, the stag comes into view, and presently falls over to the shot. It happens often enough, however, that a sharp-sighted doe manages to discover one in spite of all precautions, and then the chance of a shot is likely to be poor. The Burman with the pony is warned to keep a look-out for me as well as for the cart, and when he sees me waiting behind a bush for the shot he halts also, under cover.

Although by this plan one loses the chance of many a shot which one would have obtained from the cart, it is much more satisfactory than potting the unsuspecting animals at close ranges. It has this further advantage also, that one can generally make certain of putting a bullet in the right place, whereas when shooting from a cart the bullocks may either be nervous and refuse to stand, or else keep twitching their tails and lifting first one forefoot and then the other in the endeavour to keep off the flies. So that many a poor beast receives a badly placed

bullet, and goes off to die a lingering death. Good binoculars are essential, both to make out the deer and to spot the stag, and one must be careful to move on them up wind.

Thamin are a species of swamp deer, and the stags are very fond of wallowing. Almost every stag shot will be found to have a thick layer of dried mud on his dark coat. In spite of this, thamin are seldom, if ever, found on swampy ground. The stag seems to do his wallowing at night like other deer. The does do not appear to wallow at all. The drier the locality the more likely it is to hold thamin. The Pegu plain is about the only place I know of outside the dry zone where thamin are to be met with, and very few are to be found there now. This deer is essentially a plain's animal, avoiding hilly ground or forest. Thick, open scrub interspersed with stunted cactus are its favourite haunts. When much persecuted it may take to bamboo cover at the foot of the hills.

The stags are very belligerent, and whether it is due to the peculiar curve of the brow antler, or to their excessive fighting proclivities, the fact remains that a large number are blind in one eye, and many in both. The proportion of old stags who have lost one or both eyes from horn thrusts is, I should say, certainly not less than one in three. The rutting season lasts from February to the end of April, after which the

old stags go off, either alone or attended by one or two does, or a small stag who acts as a fag. A good head with a herd is seldom seen after May. The best time for thamin shooting is from March up to the middle of April. During February there are too many leaves in the bushes, and the stags seem to keep more or less under cover until the rut is well advanced. If the sportsman is not limited in the matter of time or distance, it is advisable, in his own interests, and in those of the thamin, as well as of succeeding sportsmen, to make it a rule never to shoot more than two stags in the same locality. It is so easy to go on for another ten or fifteen miles, and so give the thamin a chance, as well as himself the opportunity of trying fresh ground. Too frequently a man finding thamin plentiful near a particular village, stops there for a week or ten days, and perhaps shoots half a dozen stags on the same ground, out of which number possibly two only have respectable heads.

CHAPTER IX

THE HOG DEER (CERVUS PORCINUS) (*Burmese, 'Dayé'*). THE BARKING DEER (CERVULUS AUREUS VEL MUNTJAC) (*Burmese, 'Gyi'*)

A BRIEF notice must suffice for each of these little deer, as they are common to both India and Burma. The only difference the writer has been able to detect is that the horns of both species commonly grow both longer and thicker than they do in India.

The hog deer is very like a miniature sambur. The horns are exactly of the same type. The stag stands about 27 in. high at the shoulders, and has the rounded ears and long tail of the sambur family. In colour he is a reddish-brown. The brow antler grows upwards from the base at an acute angle. The horns average about 15 in.; but in Burma heads have been shot measuring 23 in. along the outer curve of the horn. The buck looks rather like a rabbit galloping through grass with head held low and stern up. They are chiefly to be found in the wet and interme-



HOG DEER
(*Cervus Porcinus*)

diate zones, along the banks of rivers, wherever there is longish grass and bush jungle suited to their requirements. The cover they affect is generally too thick to allow of their being stalked, and they are consequently either shot from elephant back or driven out by a line of beaters. They are not at all shy, and when occasionally found out in the open a stag will often stop to have a good stare, just as a sambur will under similar circumstances. It is rather pretty to see a hog deer coming towards one in a beat. He gallops along with his nose in the grass, and his horns sticking up over his back like pieces of dry twigs. Suddenly he pulls up, wheels round, and stands for a moment or two looking towards the advancing line behind him. Before he can make up his mind to canter off again, he is on his back kicking in his death throes. The venison is, to my mind, more delicate than that of any other deer.

The barking deer ought to feel proud: he has so many names for his diminutive size. Barking deer, rib-faced deer, muntjac, jungle sheep, and red deer in Ceylon. He is quite the commonest deer in Burma, and is found everywhere. Hills or plain, wet, dry or intermediate zone, all come alike to this sporting little chap. And what fun he affords to the man who is debarred from hunting bigger game; or to anyone, for that matter! He can be stalked, shot

from elephants or driven, and gives real good sport, take him as you will. And to end with, his flesh is delicious. He stands about 23 in. at the shoulders, and is of a bright golden bay, the back being of a darker shade; the throat, the inside of the limbs and the belly are white. There is a curious contraction of the skin of the face by which a ridge is formed, giving the animal the appearance of having a perpetual frown, hence the name 'rib-faced deer.' The head is long and narrow. The buck has a pair of tusks set loosely in the upper jaw; those in an old buck are about an inch in length, and with them he can inflict a nasty wound. The horns spring out of a hairy pedicle, which is some 3 or 4 in. in height, the horns themselves of a good buck measuring about 6 in. The tips turn backwards and inwards, and the test of a good head is that it should be able to be suspended from a stretched cord by the tips. There is a small brow antler about an inch in length. In Burma the horns are often very thick for their size. A girth of 3 in. is not uncommon. The tongue is exceptionally long.

The buck has an extraordinary call or bark, rather resembling that of a hoarse watch-dog. This can be heard for a great distance. The call of the doe or young is a sort of squeaky grunt, and is not often heard. The barking deer also



BARKING DEER
(*Cervulus Aureus*)

occasionally makes a clicking noise with its tongue; but I have not been able to discover whether this is the sole prerogative of the buck, as the bark is. I once came on a barking deer walking along close to cover clicking merrily. It looked like a doe, but I meant to shoot it to solve the question. However, not being particularly interested in natural history, it declined to give me the opportunity, and vanished into the jungle, clicking as it ran. Like the hog deer it is not gregarious, being found singly or in pairs. The young are spotted up to about six months of age.

The barking deer is very shy, and though found close to villages, keeps to the jungle, coming out in the early morning and evening. It is never found far from cover, and at the least alarm bolts instant. Nothing is prettier than to see this little deer in the early morning picking its dainty way close to the jungle, with the rising sun turning its chestnut coat to living gold. Like the hog deer, it runs with head held low and stern well cocked up, the white scut of a tail showing distinctly as it vanishes from sight. But unlike the hog deer it is very dainty in all its movements, and gets through the jungle in a wonderful way. It affords very pretty stalking, especially in the hills. Its eyesight is not particularly keen; but the least movement will attract its attention, and off it goes with a

succession of hoarse barks as if deriding one's efforts. Like all deer, it possesses excellent powers of scent and hearing. This sporting little deer has afforded me more genuine fun with the rifle than any other of the deer tribe, not even excepting the noble Kashmir stag. He is always *en évidence*, invariably gives sporting shots, and takes as much stalking as any other deer, and not infrequently more. He is fairly easily driven, if the beaters are good ; but is an adept at breaking back if he gets half a chance. It was the little barking deer, when black buck and chinkara shooting on the dusty plains of Northern India had palled, who first beguiled me into shooting big game ; and for this I owe him a debt of gratitude which I now endeavour to pay by leaving him alone as much as possible. But I am afraid I still turn to him occasionally for consolation during blank intervals.

A barking deer's head, when well set up, makes a pretty trophy in spite of the small size of the horns ; but the skull is nothing without the mask.

THE WILD BOAR (*SUS INDICUS*) (*Burmese, 'Wet'*)

I suppose I must say a few words about the boar, though he does not claim much attention

from the man with a rifle. Unfortunately, the ground in Burma does not admit of pig-sticking, as the only open country is given up to cultivation. When met with on ground where a shot will not disturb nobler game, he is generally saluted with a bullet, his flesh being greatly esteemed by one's Burmese followers. A wounded boar is a nasty creature all the world over, his activity and formidable tusks, to say nothing of his pluck, making him no mean adversary. The most sporting way of shooting pig in Burma is to have them driven. The rifle should be a hard-hitting weapon, as a wounded boar will at once make for the thickest cover, and, when followed up, will charge and charge again until stopped by death alone. There is no getting out of the way of a charging boar either, as there is with bison or tsaing. He can turn on a sixpence and jump like a stag, and from his comparatively small size can hide until the sportsman is almost on top of him.

Wild pig, though very intelligent beasts, are easily stalked. They have poor sight, and their hearing is not acute. No excuse is needed for shooting them in Burma wherever met with, since not only is the flesh considered a great dainty, but every pig killed means one enemy the less to the cultivator.

CHAPTER X

TRACKERS AND TRACKING. RIFLES AND AMMUNITION

I DO not propose to weary the reader with a lengthy dissertation on tracking, an art which is partly instinctive, partly acquired by experience, and is not to be learned from print. But there are one or two points which are worth noting by those who, perhaps, have not had sufficient opportunity of following heavy game to enable them to recognise at a glance tracks which are worth taking on, and those which are best left alone, and it is for such that this chapter is intended. Old hands, therefore, will please not scoff at advice which may seem to them superfluous, but which I think will be found to save the beginner many a weary and fruitless tramp, and much vexation of spirit.

When tracks are found there are four main points to be considered, and it pays to take them in the following order. (1) The approximate date; (2) the species of animals that has made them, e.g. bison or tsaing; (3) the size of the

track; (4) whether made by a solitary beast or by a herd. An experienced tracker takes in all these details at a single glance, and with the one word 'ahoung' (old)—a word that becomes unpleasantly familiar—passes on without wasting a minute. But the average Burman tracker seems to delight in beginning at the wrong end. He will stand over a track and solemnly discuss whether it was made by a bison or a tsaing, the said track being obviously three days old. If it is too old to follow it matters little whether it was made by a bison or tsaing or any other animal; it is no good to you, and once its date has been ascertained no further time need be wasted in examining it. Then, again, you decide beforehand, perhaps, to follow only the tracks of a solitary bull, and come early on the trail of a herd. Over this your trackers will linger lovingly, hoping to induce you to take it on. If you really mean going after a solitary animal don't waste a moment over the other tracks, even though they be red-hot. You can always return and follow them if you want to. It must be remembered that your Burmans want meat. They don't care a brass farthing about the head, and would really rather you shot a cow than otherwise, the meat being more tender, and the animal itself less likely to charge than a bull.

Now to revert to the considerations which

decide you to follow a trail or to leave it alone. First, the date. Until the sportsman has gained sufficient experience to judge accurately the age of the tracks, he will have to rely entirely on his trackers. While, as I have said, an absolutely fresh track can rarely be mistaken, it is easy enough to mistake a comparatively old one for a new. So much depends on the soil on which it is found, and whether there has been rain or not. To attempt to describe a fresh track under the varying conditions of soil, rain and sun would be to attempt the impossible. If any doubt exists, a comparison of the track with the impression of the heel of the sportsman's boot will often decide the question. But the tracker, if he is any good at all, will be able to give a very fair guess as to when the animal has passed.

If tracks are found of a good beast, and are decided to be those of the day before, take them on without hesitation, if there is time to do so. Your trackers will probably jib, but pay no attention to them. Of course, if fresher tracks are likely to be met with—well and good; but fresh tracks of a big beast, especially if solitary, are not found every day, and after going several hours without finding any fresh ones, you will probably regret not having followed those first met with. On the other hand, if you have followed these, and they are not more than

twenty-four hours old, in nine cases out of ten you will come to the animal's first resting-place before you have been two hours on his trail, and from here will either strike tracks of the previous evening or quite fresh ones.

Under normal circumstances, with good trackers, the writer has, when following tracks of the previous day, generally come up with his beast in five or six hours at the longest, and often much earlier. Just consider for a moment. The animal, whether bison or tsaing, is on his ground. He suspects no danger, and has no intention of marching off to the next county just to stretch his legs. After wandering over his feeding-grounds he heads back to one of his favourite lying-up places, which is, perhaps, three or four miles from the spot where the tracks were struck. In the evening, or the late afternoon, he wanders forth again; probably in the opposite direction, but not necessarily straight ahead. He makes for some favourite 'quin,' and puts in some hours there after nightfall, feeding heartily, afterwards lying down until the early hours of the morning (3 A.M., or thereabouts), when he commences to feed again, perhaps in the same place; or he may wander off to another feeding-ground, moving very leisurely and feeding as he goes. During the hours of darkness he knows he is perfectly safe, and it is then that he feeds right out in the open,

stopping in one place, perhaps half a mile in extent, for hours at a time. If he travelled straight away he would never get enough browsing and grazing to fill his huge interior. With the approach of daylight he makes for thicker jungle, turning aside every now and then to snatch a morsel of grass here and to bite off a succulent shoot there, but all the time heading for a particular spot which may be dense jungle or a favourite lying-up place in indaing forest. Tsaing seem to be more nocturnal than bison, or, perhaps it would be more correct to say that the inherent wariness of the beast induces him to do the bulk of his feeding at night, and to stop in any one spot for as short a time as possible during the daytime, until finally reaching the place where he intends to lie up for the day. This, I think, accounts for the fact that when fresh tracks of a tsaing are struck in the early morning, it usually takes some hours to come up with the animal, whereas a bison under similar circumstances can often be shot within an hour of taking on the trail. He is less suspicious, and while slowly making for the jungle he means to lie up in, he will stop for half an hour at a time at various places *en route* where the browsing particularly appeals to him.

One is apt to think—and Burmans invariably do—that if it takes several hours to come up with

a beast when he has only passed an hour or two before, to follow tracks twenty-four hours old must necessarily involve a long, stern chase ; but, then, Burmans never seem to take into consideration the animal's habits, and regard every bison and tsaing as a beast who is always steadily marching away from them in a more or less straight line. I have endeavoured to show that this is not the case ; indeed, if it were, we should never get up to our beast at all, and it would very soon starve to death. If we could only track at night, the short time taken to come up with the animal would be a revelation to some of us. The reader may ask why, if my reasoning is correct, experienced hunters will have nothing to say to a track that is two days old. It may be argued that if the beast sticks more or less to the same feeding-grounds, it should not take very much longer to overtake him than when fairly fresh tracks are found. I will admit that there is something in this, and I have not the slightest doubt that if tracks two or three days old were followed, the animal would *occasionally* be found fairly close at hand. I say occasionally advisedly and for this reason. Neither bison nor tsaing—elephants least of all—restrict themselves ordinarily to one feeding-ground, or to one particular jungle. Apart from the fact that all the pachyderms change their ground entirely from time to time, according to the season of the year,

to get away from the flies and to obtain better feeding, there are possibly half a dozen favourite feeding-grounds and lying-up places in the particular area over which the animals are wandering for the time being. They will visit one place one day, another the next, and a third spot, perhaps, the following day, returning to the original feeding-ground sooner or later, possibly on the third day, but perhaps not for ten days or more. Therefore, if the sportsman follows a trail which is two days old, he is likely to find that it leads from one feeding-ground to another, perhaps six miles apart, with a corresponding distance between the jungles the beast has lain up in. So that a six hours' tramp is lengthened to one of twelve or more, involving a night out in the jungle, only for the sportsman to find after all his trouble that the animal has, perhaps, made for another locality altogether. This may happen, of course, at any time, even when on absolutely fresh tracks; but the longer the interval that has elapsed, the more likely is it that the animal may have wandered off to pastures new. But if the trail is only a day old, the beast, unless he has changed his ground entirely, has not had time to wander very far afield. He is overtaken while moving from one feeding-ground to another. All animals when changing their ground seem to forsake their usual habits. They are like birds migrating.

It is, in fact, a migration of a kind. A restlessness seems to pervade them, and they do not stop either to feed or to lie up until they have reached the place they have been steadily making for, perhaps twenty miles off. Arrived there they resume their normal habits, wandering about for food, but never going very far unless alarmed, or until a desire for a further change sends them on the trek once more; probably back to their old ground. I hope the reader will forgive me if I have been somewhat long-winded on this subject; but it is so much more satisfactory to have a reason for following a trail, or for leaving it alone, than doing so simply because it happens to be new or old, with no fixed idea as to the chances of success or the reverse. A good beast is worth a good tramp, and it is infinitely more satisfactory to follow the comparatively old trail of a really good bull than the fresh one of a smaller animal, always provided there is good prospect of coming up with the former by the evening.

With regard to the consideration of whether the track is that of a bison or tsaing, here again experience is the only guide. An old bull bison makes a track that can be mistaken for nothing else; but the trail of a young bull bison and that of an old bull tsaing is often so alike as to deceive even experienced trackers. The ground over which the tracks lead will generally help the

sportsman in arriving at a correct conclusion, if he has studied the habits of the different species. While bison and tsaing are often found on the same ground, certain portions of it are more suited to one species than the other. The more hilly the ground, the more likely is it to contain a larger proportion of bison than tsaing, especially if it is far from human habitation. As to size, the track of the fore-feet of an old bull, whether bison or tsaing, is always round, the hind hoof being more or less pointed. A young bull makes a small round track. A cow's track is invariably pointed, whether made by the fore or hind feet. A large round track on soft leaves, or hard, sandy soil, so that the clear impression is just stamped without being sunk in, is the sort of track you are on the look out for, and the sight of it, if fresh enough to be followed, will rejoice your heart as much as any fisherman's is gladdened by the singing of his winch.

To decide whether a track is that of a solitary beast or a herd bull, follow it up for a short distance. It often happens that a herd bull will keep a little apart from the herd; but a brief search will soon disclose the trail of the herd moving parallel to it at a few yards' interval. When your tracker comes to a dead stop over the fresh track of a big beast, and pronounces it to be that of an 'atee gway' (solitary bull),

it is annoying to find, a dozen yards farther on, the trail of a herd alongside. To avoid disappointment, don't make up your mind that it is a solitary bull until the absence of other tracks puts the matter beyond doubt.

Tracking, as I have said, is the inherited instinct of the jungle man, backed by practice and experience. Few, if any, white men can hope to compete with the brown inhabitants of the jungle, whose ancestors have lived in it for generations, and to whom every elephant path is as familiar as Piccadilly to the Londoner. Therefore it is best, once you have decided to follow a trail, to leave your trackers quite alone, unless you have sufficient experience to do the tracking yourself. However keen you may be to help them, you probably do more harm than good—by walking over the tracks they are looking for, and distracting their attention. If they are good men they will puzzle out the tracks. If bad your efforts will be useless.

Should the tracks lead into heavy bamboo jungle, and *keep* in it, it is fairly certain that the animal is in some part of that particular jungle, and you may come on him at any moment, even though still following the trail of the day before. It is always worth while to move very quietly in thick cover, even when on old tracks, for this reason. The old and warier beasts often select a thick piece of jungle, extending,

perhaps, for several miles, as their head quarters. In this they wander, seldom moving outside except at night, and lying up day after day in almost the same spots. Tracks of such animals will be found to cross and recross each other, as the bull has wandered to and fro daily over the same feeding-grounds. It is a common occurrence in such places for a sportsman suddenly to run up against his beast while he imagined that it was still many miles away.

Tracks zigzagging from place to place are always a good sign that the animal has fed at leisure, and is not alarmed. Those leading for a long distance in a bee-line are to be viewed with suspicion : the animals have had notice to quit. Galloping tracks may be abandoned. The quarry is seriously alarmed, will travel for miles, and, if followed, will be found to be very much on the alert when come up with. It is most annoying to find, as occasionally happens, that the tracks of a solitary bull follow those of a herd, and cross and recross the latter. This means that the bull is following the herd and chasing the cows. When this takes place the herd keeps on the run for the whole day, dropping to a walk as the bull is left behind, and trotting off as he comes up again. There is, in such cases, little chance of obtaining a shot. The bull is on the move throughout the day, not even stopping to feed. Warm droppings may be

found, but the sportsman gets no closer. Indeed, so far from helping him, signs that he is getting close are really assisting the bull ; for the sportsman following the trail into thick cover at mid-day, and finding he is close, as he thinks, to his beast, halts for two or three hours, supposing the animal to be lying up, when really he is still in pursuit of the coy females of the herd. So that when the tracking is resumed in the expectation of finding the bull feeding, perhaps half a mile farther on, the unwelcome truth gradually forces itself on the sportsman that he is now hours behind ; the herd being several miles in advance, with the love-sick bull still in close pursuit.

With regard to trackers, really experienced men are few. But one good man and a couple of intelligent coolies are all that are necessary. If two good trackers are obtainable so much the better. The Burmans work better in pairs. The sportsman should make up his mind not to follow any beast, whether in a herd or solitary, which he has reason to believe does not possess a good head. Even the best Burman trackers cannot understand our absurd craving, as they consider it, for big heads. All they want, or care about, is meat ; though the fascination of pursuit appeals to many of them.

Before taking on a track, it will save much disappointment and annoyance if the sportsman

decides in his own mind the hour up to which he is prepared to follow it; in the rains it is advisable to abandon further pursuit in time to admit of camp being reached before dark. In the hot weather it is often desirable to sleep on the tracks. He should make his decision known to his trackers, who will work all the better for having definite instructions. A good tracker should be able to state approximately how long it will take to come up with the animal under ordinary circumstances. If it is met with sooner than he expects, so much the better. But nothing is more annoying than to follow a trail which the trackers have every reason to suppose will not bring them up to the beast before dark, and to have to give it up in order to reach camp before night sets in. The Burman is an impetuous sort of fellow, and on striking tracks of the day before at 3 P.M., or thereabouts, will often follow them when miles from camp, knowing that the chance of coming up with the beast before dark is so slight as to make following it labour lost. On the other hand, when fairly fresh tracks are found in the morning, he is just as likely, after several miles of tracking, to turn round and tell his employer that the animal has gone far, and that there is little chance of coming up with it before dark; whereas, in reality, another hour of persevering tracking would bring the sportsman to his beast.

In such cases the hunter must use his own judgment, bearing in mind that a really good tracker will not readily abandon the pursuit of an animal while there is a fair chance of coming up with it. Any time spent in waiting to allow a beast lying up to come out and feed again must, of course, be added to the time it will take to get up to it. A good tracker should possess keen eyesight and hearing, and should know the jungle thoroughly within a radius of ten miles from his village. In addition to being able to track well, he must be both persevering and staunch. If he is afraid of the quarry, he is not likely to exert himself particularly to bring the sportsman within shot of it. Besides, his nerves are likely to play him all sorts of tricks just when success seems assured. The writer has had some splendid fellows as trackers, men who would follow up a wounded bison or tsaing as eagerly as a terrier does a rat, and to whom the meaning of the word fear was unknown in connexion with big game. The difficulty with such men has been to restrain their ardour when a beast has been wounded. But there have been others who have purposely lost the tracks when drawing near an unwounded beast, or have bolted just as the shot was about to be taken, thus effectually alarming the animal. And this with inexperienced trackers has happened over and over again. The worst of it

is that there is no telling whether a Burman is staunch or not until he is tested, and it frequently happens that the men who boast most loudly of their prowess are the very ones to be troubled with 'nerves' at the critical moment.

After the trackers have seen the sportsman knock over one or two big beasts, even the most faint-hearted are likely to have confidence in him; but before this desirable state of mind can be attained a good chance may have been thrown away. Elephants are another matter. I have only met two Burmans who would follow one into a big herd of elephants, and personally I am satisfied to be brought up to a herd, and expect no further assistance when I get there. But a decent tracker should, at all events, bring the sportsman within sight or sound of his game, and should remain motionless while the shot is being taken. It is always best, whenever it can be managed, to drop your man as far away as possible from the scene of action; but it often happens that the animal is met with unexpectedly, and it is then that with faint-hearted trackers a bad attack of nerves is likely to ensue. Even if there is no doubt as to the staunchness of the tracker, his curiosity may induce him to creep on after the sportsman, and his movements may alarm the game. I lost my one and only chance of bagging a coal-black tsaing, one out of the three black bulls men-

tioned in Chapter III, by the tracker moving on after being told to sit down. The herd, as so often happens, were on a plateau, and we could hear them moving about in the undergrowth as we got near it. MOUNG TWUNI was dropped behind a bamboo clump about a hundred yards away, while I made a slight *détour*, so as to avoid coming right on top of the herd. I could see nothing as I gained the crest, so crept on for a yard or two, and stood hidden beside a tree, while peering anxiously to my right in the direction I knew the herd to be. I was expecting to see one or more red beasts; but suddenly my eyes lighted on the perfectly black hind-quarters of an animal standing motionless, broadside on, about fifty yards to my right, the rest of him being hidden. 'Bison,' I thought, but a second glance showed the white patch on the buttocks. I raised my rifle, and was on the point of putting a 10-bore bullet through his flanks, when there was a loud snort, and as I pressed the trigger the tsaing wheeled round and dashed off, followed by the rest of the herd, which contained two other bulls as black as himself. A snap shot through the smoke at one of them was barren of result, and I had lost the only chance I ever had, or am ever likely to have, of bagging a black tsaing. On going back to the crest, I saw the tracker squatting half way up the slope, absolutely in the open, and in a direct line

with the spot where the herd had been. They had been intently watching him while I was creeping round their flank, and had dashed off a second or two before I was able to fire. This man, Mounng Twuni, was an uncommonly good tracker, and I have since bagged many a fine bull through his agency; but the memory of that lost tsaing haunts me to the present day. Had I got him it would have been interesting to note the size of the horns; as it was, the thick bamboo cover prevented my getting even a glimpse of his head, or that of the other two bulls. There was but a momentary vision of three huge black bodies mixed up with the chestnut of the cows as the herd thundered off, and in another second the jungle had swallowed them up. I said little—the catastrophe was too great for words—but, like the parrot, I ‘thought a dale.’ A more crestfallen pair as we plodded back ten weary miles to camp it would be hard to imagine.

While tracking, when there is reason to suppose that the game is close at hand, it pays the sportsman to creep ahead, with the trackers following close behind. As the former has to be careful not to step on a dried twig or dead leaf, it follows that in addition to keeping a bright look-out he must be constantly looking where he puts his feet. While doing so he will often be able to pick out the trail. But if the tracking is difficult, it is of no great consequence. The

tracker behind will not let him wander off the tracks for more than a yard or so. It is a mistake, in fact, to bother too much about the tracking. The man behind will look after that. What is essential is that the sportsman should be the first to view his game, and this he cannot, as a rule, expect to do with the tracker perhaps five or six yards in front of him. By going ahead, not only is the sportsman more likely to get an easy shot; but he is able to set the pace—a great consideration. The bare-footed Burman can move noiselessly faster than the sportsman, and in his excitement he is apt to forget that the man with the gun is the person to see the game, or perhaps he thinks it will be all right, that he will suddenly spot the beast, and point him out to the expectant ‘thakin.’ Unfortunately, the animal doesn’t always see things in the same light, and is off before the sportsman can get the rifle to his shoulder. This is more especially the case with tsaing, which are generally found standing motionless, or lying down at the most unexpected times. There is then often just time, and no more, for a quick but steady aim, and the instant pressing of the trigger. These wary beasts are seldom found unsuspiciously feeding. If the sportsman is leading, he may even have the chance of shooting a tsaing while it is lying up for the day; an unlikely chance, it is true, but within the

bounds of possibility. 'Lying up' and merely lying down have very distinct meanings as applied to tsaing. Of course, the sportsman would not think of usurping the tracker's place while the game is still some distance ahead, unless he is himself an experienced tracker. He leads only when the beast is expected to be viewed at any moment. The object is to get over the ground as quickly as possible, until signs are met with that the animal is not far off. The sportsman and tracker then change places, and the former may find that he will still have to lead for a mile or more before his beast is sighted. Rising ground should always be very carefully negotiated. More often than not tsaing, both when solitary and when in herds, will be found on the top a short distance from the crest, where they will be quite invisible from below.

Whenever possible it is worth while to ride to the ground, sometimes four miles away, or even farther. There is no object in making a labour of what should be a pleasure, and the ride in the early morning is a great saving of fatigue. It will be found that on an average, the sportsman, having ridden on to his ground, will still have a tramp of ten to fifteen miles, all told, before he is back again in his tent or zayat. In some places it is even possible to ride for a little while looking for tracks; but

usually it means that a man has to go ahead with a 'dah,' lopping down overhanging bamboo and other obstructions. This makes a noise and wastes time, and before long jungle is entered in which riding is impossible. So that after reaching one's ground it is as well to send the pony back at once.

When going after elephants I invariably ride till the herd is located, and then keep the pony in some convenient spot about a quarter of a mile away. It is now at hand, either to ride back to camp on after the shot, or to follow the herd if it moves off. This is possible in the dry zone owing to lack of heavy jungle, thick patches of cover being found only at considerable intervals.

As to rifles, the writer believes implicitly in a D.B. .450-400 high-velocity rifle taking the equivalent of sixty grains of cordite in axite, and a 400-grains bullet. With this rifle elephants, bison and tsaing have been shot in the densest cover and in the open alike. It has now been in use for several years, and during that time it has not lost its owner a single big beast fired at. Generally one, or at most two, bullets have been sufficient to account for the biggest animals; but I have had occasionally to give a beast as many as half a dozen shots before finally securing him. This, however, has been under exceptional circumstances, when either the denseness of the jungle or the failing light has prevented an accurate

aim being taken. I consider a $\cdot 400$ rifle as above mentioned quite as efficient as, and infinitely more handy than, an 8-bore black-powder rifle. My rifle weighs a little over 10 lbs. An 8-bore weighs from 15 to 17 lbs. Rather a difference ! Many men hamper themselves—unnecessarily it seems to me—with a $\cdot 500$ D.B. high-velocity rifle, or even a $\cdot 600$. A $\cdot 500$ weighs over 12 lbs., that is, 2 lbs. more than a $\cdot 400$, and the additional weight of 2 lbs. is a matter for consideration in the tropics. Besides, it is unnecessary. If a $\cdot 400$ fails to stop a charging beast, a $\cdot 500$ will not succeed in doing so.

As the circumstances under which I came to invest in a $\cdot 400$ high-velocity rifle, rather than one of heavier calibre, were somewhat unusual, it may be worth while to narrate them. For some years I had shot big game with a D.B. 10-bore Paradox gun by Holland and Holland, taking eight drams of black powder and a 2-oz. steel-cored bullet. This rifle was sighted to fifty yards, and was as accurate as a weapon of the sort could be. At sixty yards it could put a bullet into the centre of the lid of a cigar box, and could be relied on for all practical purposes up to eighty yards, beyond which distance accurate results could not be counted on. The steel-cored bullet gave a smashing blow ; but powerful as the rifle was, it lacked the penetration of the $\cdot 400$ subsequently purchased. This rifle had

the defects common to all black-powder large-bore rifles, viz. weight (13 lbs.), inaccuracy beyond short distances, heavy recoil, and last, but not least, a cloud of smoke which, after firing, enveloped the shooter. This nearly got me into serious trouble on two occasions with elephants, and once was the means of losing me, for the time being, a rogue elephant which I had been after for days. There was another objection in connexion with this rifle, viz. that its ammunition could only be purchased from the maker of the rifle. On going home to England on leave, I decided, not without a struggle, to sell the 10-bore, which I had become fond of as a trusty companion on many a trip after big game, and to purchase in its place one of the new high-velocity rifles of which I had heard so much. So I parted with the dear old weapon which had done me so well, and which at the time of selling it was in as good a condition as when newly purchased.

While in England I went to one or two of the leading rifle makers, but was confronted with the difficulty with regard to cartridges which had caused me so much bother and expense with the 10-bore. The makers declined to supply rifles to take Kynoch's or Eley's cases. The reason alleged was that the importance of a rifle cartridge being absolutely reliable was so great that the rifle makers did not care

to risk cartridges turned out by others. This objection has always seemed to me to be puerile. Cartridge manufacturers like Eley and Kynoch do not supply bad cartridges, and a missfire from one of their cartridges is not more likely to occur than one from a cartridge supplied by the maker of the rifle. The real reason was not far to seek. However, I had suffered such inconvenience in Burma through having to get my cartridges sent out direct from England, and had been put to such expense in the matter of freight, agency, duty and, finally, carriage to my destination, not to mention the fact that the actual price of special cartridges was considerably higher than the price of those turned out by cartridge manufacturers, that I decided to go for my rifle where I *could* get one taking Eley's or Kynoch's cases. I therefore went to the Army and Navy Stores in Victoria Street, and have never regretted having done so. I had no experience of high-velocity rifles, but decided on a .450-bore, as I thought a .400 would prove too light a weapon for efficient use on heavy game.

Having appointed a day for the trial of a couple of rifles at the Society's range at Nunhead, I went down there shortly before returning to Burma. To my dismay the .450 rifles were not forthcoming, but the Society's employé had brought with him a couple of .450-.400 rifles

instead. He explained that, owing to the new rule prohibiting the importation into India of .450 rifles, the Society was unable to supply one. The regulation had only just been published. Fortunately for myself the specialist in the gun department had neglected to send down a couple of .500 rifles for trial in addition to the .400, or I would almost certainly have plumped for one of these, and so have unnecessarily overweighted myself. Here was a dilemma! I could only spare one more day at Nunhead to try the rifle again, when a particular form of backsight I had designed was fitted. And I had little faith in the .400-bore. However, here I was, and here were the rifles. I might just as well try them, now that I had troubled to come down. I did so, and was so pleased with their accuracy and penetration, that I selected the one which had given the best results, and ordered the backsight to be fitted, and the stock cut to my measurements. For good or ill I was now pledged to the .400. I tried it again with the new backsight, and it made wonderful shooting, so that, so far as accuracy went, I had a rifle I could rely on. On getting out to Burma the first thing I tackled with it was a bull bison. The bullet, a solid nickel, struck the animal in the chest and was cut out close to the tail. The bull galloped for a hundred yards and fell over dead. The next

time I used it was also against bison, in very thick cover in August. I got up to within six yards of the beast before I could see him at all. A soft-nosed bullet behind the shoulder, as he stood broadside on, bowled him over, and I gave him two more shots merely to prevent him getting on his legs in the dense stuff in which he was. The bull was really killed by the first shot. On another occasion I fired at a large bull elephant going away from me. The story of this hunt has already been told. I had given him the ear-shot, but had missed the brain. There was a steep nullah a couple of hundred yards farther on, and as I ran after the bull, he scrambled down into the nullah and climbed the opposite bank, thus presenting me with the broad of his back. The little bullet struck fair on the spine, and simply crumpled the huge brute up. I had only to run up to him and brain him with a shot in the ear.

Space does not avail to relate the subsequent performances of this insignificant-looking little rifle, but it will suffice to state that it has accounted for close on eighty head of game, both in India and Burma, from gooral to elephants, and has never yet failed me. It has killed among other game some thirty thick-skinned animals; so that it has been thoroughly tested. I have missed with it occasionally, of course, when firing long shots at gooral or barking deer;

but the fault has lain with me, not with the rifle. The cartridges (Kynoch's) can be supplied either with cordite or axite powder. Personally, I prefer the last. Axite is practically unaffected by tropical temperature, does not corrode the barrels as cordite does, and is just as powerful. The rifle is more easily cleaned than when cordite is used, and there is not the same necessity for wiping out the barrels immediately after use. The cartridges are obtainable from the Army and Navy Stores, Calcutta, or from any of the gun-makers in the large Presidency towns of India, or from Rangoon. Provided that one is careful to purchase only cartridges newly arrived from England, there is no fear of their proving unsatisfactory, either as regards missfires or deficiency in penetration. The writer has used cartridges which have been opened for two years, and has never had a missfire or found them lacking either in penetration or accuracy.

They are supplied with four kinds of bullet, viz. solid nickel, soft-nose, soft-nose split, and capped. The two last are unnecessary, and are only fit for use on small deer. They lack penetration, and give a big surface wound. The soft nose has just the tip of the bullet exposed from the nickel casing, rather less than one-eighth of an inch. This is a most useful cartridge on bison and tsaing when standing broad-

side on, as it penetrates well into the vitals before bursting up, the nickel base carrying on. It is also an ideal bullet on tiger, bear, sambur and other large deer. I prefer it to the solid nickel for shoulder shots at bison or tsaing, as the solid nickel striking an animal broadside on always passes clean through it, and though he may not go far, it does not give quite the same shock as the soft-nose, which remains in the body. My practice is to load the right barrel with a soft-nosed bullet and the left with a solid nickel. If I get a shoulder shot, I fire the right barrel; but if the beast is end on to me—which end does not signify—I give him the solid nickel bullet, which rakes him from end to end. In all cases of a doubtful shot, through undergrowth, for instance, where the exact spot I wish to strike cannot be determined, or where the bullet may have to cut its way through intervening bamboos, I fire the left barrel. For elephants, of course, only the solid nickel bullet is used in both barrels. Now, I hope the reader won't run away with the idea that because I happen to possess a light rifle I feel bound to crack it up. On the contrary, had I not thoroughly tested the rifle on all kinds of big game, and under all sorts of conditions, I should be most reluctant to urge its adoption as against a heavier rifle of the same type. But I have thoroughly proved, to my own satisfaction at all events, that a 400-

bore rifle, taking sixty grains of cordite, or its equivalent in axite, and a .400-grain bullet, will knock the stuffing out of the biggest beast alive ; and that being so, why burden oneself uselessly with a heavier rifle ? True, if a bison is hit through the ribs, i.e. too far back, with a .400 bullet he will go on ; but so he will if hit in the same spot with a 4-bore. He will eventually be bagged, no doubt ; but may give trouble, whatever the bore of the rifle used.

To make certain of killing an animal, whether deer or bison, he must either be raked, or struck through the vitals, and if the sportsman is patient and careful, this can be done nine times out of ten. It is well-nigh useless to fire into the brown of a big beast. If, owing to the dense undergrowth, his exact position cannot be made out, recourse must be had to binoculars. There is plenty of time if he has not heard the approach, and all hurry is to be avoided. The animal is unsuspicious, and if while you are trying to make him out he begins to smell a rat, he will not bolt so long as you keep perfectly still. On the contrary, he will take two or three strides forward to see if that faint rustle which he has just heard means anything, or is only the breeze stirring the leaves. He now gives you a clear shot, and before he has time to recognise danger, he is thundering off with a bullet low down behind the shoulder, or

planted in the centre of his broad chest. In either case he is a dead bull before he has gone a hundred yards.

As to second rifles carried by a gun-bearer, the writer has no faith in them. Your gun-bearer either bolts at the critical moment, taking the rifle with him, or fires in a panic, and nearly blows your head off. They may have been necessary in the days of black-powder rifles, which, owing to the big charge of powder, were apt to jam after the first shot. But with modern high-velocity rifles they are certainly unnecessary. However, everyone to his taste.

In Burma, at all events, where most of the game is shot in heavy jungle at close quarters, any bore smaller than a .400 is to be deprecated. The smaller bores, such as the .300, .303 and .350, lack the smashing power of the heavier rifles. They drill a neat hole, but the wound made is so minute as not to affect the animal materially for the time being; also, there is little or no blood spoor, a consideration when you are following up a wounded beast. Magazine rifles are but sorry substitutes for double-barrelled rifles. They are now made so well that there is little chance of a jam occurring; but one can never be sure, and the writer has an unpleasant recollection of a wounded bear waltzing round him, and trying to get his wind, while the empty case obstinately declined

to be ejected. It was got out at last, but only just in the nick of time. The bore of magazine rifles is nearly always too small for heavy game, and another objection is that only one kind of cartridge can be used at the same time. So that if your magazine is loaded up with solid nickel bullets, and you get a broadside shot, the beast may go for a considerable distance; while if you have soft-nosed cartridges in the magazine, they will not be of much use for a raking shot, and in the event of a charge may land you in a hole. And if you mix them, putting in some soft-nose and some solid, the chances are that you will fire a solid when you want to use a soft-nose, and *vice versa*. Magazine rifles may be all very well on deer and soft-skinned animals, but they are not the proper weapons for the pachyderms. It may be as well to state that a .450-.400 rifle means that the chamber alone is .450 bore, the rifle being bored for the .400 bullet. A bottle-nosed cartridge is used, the base fitting the .450 chamber. Thus the required amount of powder can be utilised without increasing the length of the cartridge case.

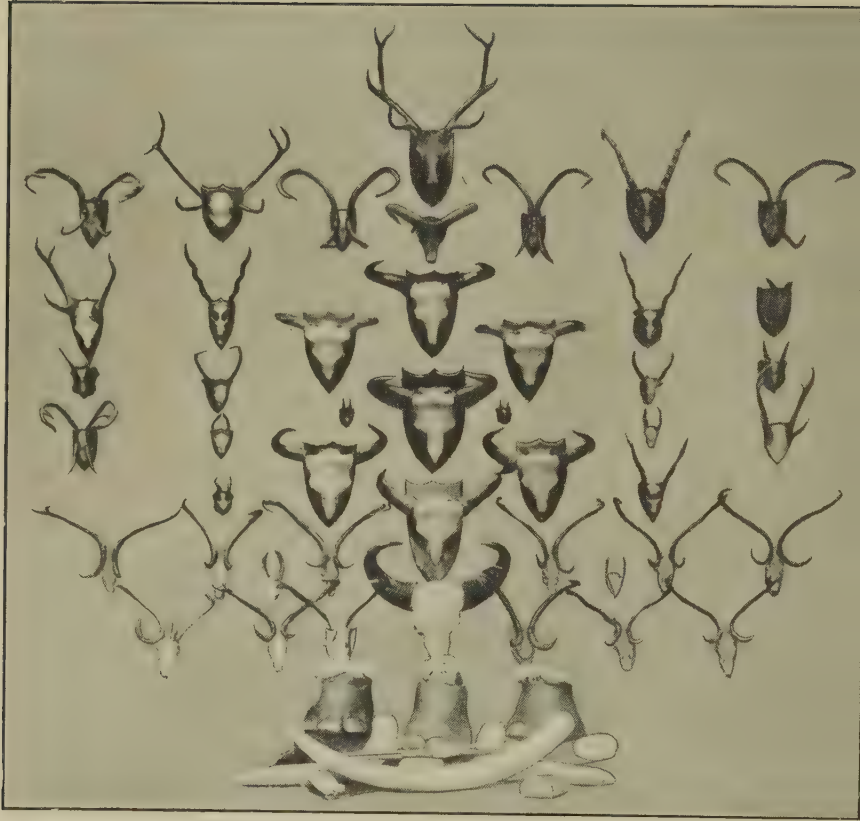
With regard to the price of rifles, it is undoubtedly sound to buy the best you can afford. A rifle used on heavy game is bound to come in for a lot of hard wear and tear. Exposed to all kinds of weather, with no efficient gun-

maker within hundreds of miles perhaps, the locks should be of the soundest. This is especially the case where hammerless ejector rifles are used, the best of all, *when good*, for big game. From £50 to £60 should buy a really good non-ejector rifle from a first-class maker; but best quality weapons can often be picked up second-hand, in practically new condition, for half these prices. My own rifle is not what is known as a best quality weapon; but it has stood the test of time both in the hills and in the plains. It has been subjected to heavy rain, cold and intense heat, and has had more than one fall; but the locks are as sound as when the rifle was purchased several years ago, and have only once been taken to pieces and cleaned. Still, I may have been fortunate, and if the higher price can be afforded, it is worth while to purchase the higher grade weapon. Have the safety catch made non-automatic. It is annoying, to say the least of it, when you have loaded the rifle, and expect to see your animal every second, to find when you do so that your rifle is at 'safety.' Also, in the event of a charge, after hurriedly reloading, there may not be time to slip the safety catch forward. When carrying the rifle, and not expecting to see game, the catch can always be slipped back to 'safety.' There seems to be only one other hint worth giving with regard to the purchase of a rifle, and that

is to fire it *yourself* on the gunmaker's range, several shots at the different distances both from a rest and without. This precaution should never be omitted even when purchasing a rifle from the best gunmaker in England. No two men take quite the same sighting, and a weapon which may suit one man admirably, may make but poor practice in the hands of another, though he may be an equally good shot.

As to carrying the rifle, that again is a matter of opinion. My own practice is to hand it to the trackers until I am on fresh tracks, or expect to meet with game. I have never lost a beast by doing so; but even if I had, should still consider it not worth while to cart even a 10-lb. rifle up hill and down dale under a broiling sun throughout the day on the off-chance of unexpectedly running up against a tsaing or bison. The tracker is in his own country, and the climate is nothing to him; but it is a good deal to the white man. If, when tracks are not forthcoming, one takes the rifle from time to time to relieve the tracker, and carries it from the time tracks are struck until either the shot is fired or the beast has bolted, it will be found that the sportsman is taking his fair share, and perhaps a bit over. Finally, when the tracker is carrying the rifle let him do so with the muzzle over his shoulder, pointing in front of him. Then if the rifle does suddenly

chance to go off, it can only blow a hole in the ground some yards ahead of him. Burmans are very good about not tampering with firearms, and in this respect compare favourably with natives of India. All the same, it is just as well to keep an eye on the weapon, and to see that the catch is always at 'safety' whenever the rifle is handed to the tracker.



ASSORTED TROPHIES, CHIEFLY FROM BURMA, 1908

CHAPTER XI

PERSONAL KIT. STORES. CAMP EQUIPMENT.
SERVANTS

FOR those of my readers who have had no experience of camping in Burma, a few words as to personal kit, camp equipment, &c., may not come amiss. Bring from England nothing for the jungle except, perhaps, rifle and ammunition. Everything else can be obtained locally. First, as to headgear. For use in the jungle nothing beats a brown or khaki-covered Elwood hat, preferably with a bulge round the side to protect the head against the rising and setting sun. These can be obtained in Rangoon from Messrs. Rowe & Co. or Whiteaway Laidlaw for Rs.10. They stand any amount of rain and hard wear and tear. The ordinary pith 'sola topi' is useless in the rain; a heavy shower reduces it to pulp, and it is then only fit to throw away. In the hot weather, however, it will be found useful, especially if the wearer has had a touch of sun or fever. A cap is necessary to replace the Elwood hat in the early morning or in the

evening, and when close on your beast, as overhanging twigs of bamboo or branches scrape against the hard Elwood hat with a rending sound that can be heard a quarter of a mile off. The coat should be heather mixture in colour, of cotton texture, with a red lining as a protection against the rays of the sun. It is best to get the material and have it made up by the local 'durzie' according to your requirements. It can be obtained from the Basil Mission, Cannanore, at from ten to twelve annas a yard, from the Elgin Mills, Cawnpore, or from most of the big shops in Rangoon at slightly higher prices. Two coats will be required, with knickerbockers to match. Next to the skin flannel is the only wear, and of all kinds of flannel nothing, in the writer's opinion, comes up to Viyella. It is light, healthy, practically unshrinkable, and washes to a rag. Some men wear an ordinary cotton tennis-shirt with a gauze vest underneath; while others discard the gauze vest, and wear the cotton shirt alone. This practice is recommended to anyone desirous of committing suicide within a brief space of time in an unostentatious manner. Others prefer cut-shorts to knickerbockers. These *look* very workmanlike, and if one does not mind one's knees being more or less scratched by thorns and creepers, and bitten by mosquitoes, there is nothing to be said against their use in dry

weather. But they are unsuited to the rains. The wet edges rub against the knees and sow the seeds of rheumatism. Knickerbockers, with short drawers underneath—preferably of Viyella—reaching just *below* the knee, are quite as comfortable, if made loose so as not to hamper one's stride uphill; and in the rains are infinitely to be preferred. Drawers of Indian gauze are better than none at all. For the legs nothing beats woollen putties, and of all putties the Kashmir puttie is the best. Being made of pure wool it clings to the leg, and is less likely to come undone than any other kind. Also, it can be put on tighter than other putties, without fear of stopping the circulation of the blood when climbing a hill. Serge putties are an abomination in the jungle. They fray easily, come undone on the slightest provocation, and if put on tightly, give one cramp in the calves. Two pairs of Kashmir putties, costing about Rs.1.8 a pair, will see one through a three months' shoot.

Now we come to the vexed question of foot-gear. Shoes of any kind are unsuitable. They expose the ankles to thorns, creepers and snake bites, and the shoes themselves soon get out of shape. Many men wear rope-soled boots with thin canvas uppers. The objection to these is that they are by no means noiseless, that after being wet the rope soles dry hard and get

out of shape, and that one's toes get many a nasty knock against hidden stones and stumps of trees, especially when coming downhill. Nothing really beats the ordinary ammunition boot well studded with iron nails—Peshawar nails for choice—as giving a broad and firm foothold. A pair of rubber stalking boots or shoes must be carried, and when on fresh tracks the heavy boots are exchanged for the stalking boots. These should have light leather uppers and thick red-rubber soles. The drawback is that these stalking boots are expensive, and though the rubber wears well, the sewing soon frays under the combined influence of wet and sun. But lately a new stalking boot has come on the market which is as perfect as anything of the kind can well be. They are exactly of the same kind and material as a child's ordinary beach shoe—except that they are boots, not shoes. The uppers are of thin brown canvas, while the soles are of stout golosh rubber covered with large rubber studs about half an inch in diameter, and projecting from the sole about one-eighth of an inch. These boots wear fairly well, are almost as noiseless as the naked foot, and give a splendid grip on all sorts of ground. They have the advantage, too, of being cheap,—Rs.5 a pair. They can be obtained from Messrs. Whiteaway Laidlaw & Co., of Calcutta and Rangoon. There is no reason why these boots should not be worn

always in the jungle, provided one has enough of them. Eight pairs would not be too many for a three months' shoot; but if kept solely as stalking boots three pairs would be ample. The golosh, which comes on to the uppers above the toes, is sufficient protection against stones and hidden obstacles; but the uppers are not sufficiently thick to be proof against snake bite. Two pairs of ammunition boots and three pairs of stalking boots should see a man comfortably through a three months' shoot in any sort of weather. Thick socks of the kind known as Army socks should be worn. A plentiful supply of handkerchiefs will be required. In the rains especially, mosquitoes, sand and eye flies abound, and attack one vigorously as soon as one sits down for a meal. The best way of keeping these pests at bay is to spread a handkerchief over the head underneath the hat. If these handkerchiefs are of khaki or fawn colour they can be worn as described while tracking without fear of alarming game, which might be the case if a white handkerchief were displayed in the same way. A small towel with a dry flannel shirt and a pair of socks wrapped up in it should also be carried. When compelled to wait for two or three hours in the middle of the day, to let the animal you are after commence to feed after lying up, it is very refreshing to have a rub down and a change, instead of sitting in a

shirt which is wringing wet from perspiration. A pair of binoculars on your belt completes your personal outfit. No knife is required. Your Burman trackers carry a 'dah,' which is all that is wanted.

As regards one's followers in the jungle, I always take two coolies, whether I have one or two trackers with me. The trackers must go light if they are to work properly. I take a cartridge-bag, in which I carry two or three handkerchiefs, a small compass, a snake-bite lancet (with a few crystals of permanganate of potash contained in the screw top), a cap and three spare cartridges. This bag I carry myself. Five cartridges fit into an outside left-breast pocket of my coat, which is sewn into folds each to contain a cartridge. Two cartridges are kept handy in a lower pocket ready to slip into the rifle. Each coolie has a split bamboo over his shoulder. At the end of one bamboo is slung the men's food, beetal boxes, &c. At the other end are my towel—containing flannel shirt, socks and stalking boots—and a Burberry slip-on coat reaching below the knee. This, by the way, is an absolute necessity in the rains, and a comfort at any time. It is light and proof against anything short of a tropical downpour. One can sit on it instead of on the damp ground, and if belated, or if one intends to spend the night in the jungle, it can either be rolled up to form a pillow or worn as a

cloak. The other man carries at one end of his bamboo my food for the day, packed into a small 'degchie,' with lid, and tied up in a duster. At the other end is a thermos flask (containing hot tea), and odds and ends of his own, probably his food, cheroots, &c. The two trackers are thus absolutely unhampered, carrying nothing, except perhaps a 'dah' between them. When I am not carrying my rifle myself, they take it in turn to do so. Thus equipped one is prepared for the longest day, and even a night out if needs be. The coolies, if intelligent men, are often very useful in picking up lost tracks; and, as all are barefooted, they move through the jungle as quietly as mice. When getting near the animal they are warned to follow behind at a hundred yards' distance.

As regards the food carried with one, it is as well to take sufficient to last out a long day, and of as appetising a quality as possible. A thick slice of cheese and a hunk of bread may be excellent fare for a day's rough shooting in England or Ireland, and many a time have I gone the whole day on such provender, and asked for no better. But in the tropics one is not possessed by that keen, healthy appetite which assails one in the temperate zone. A faint sinking takes the place of a healthy hunger, and while there is a craving for nourishment, the stomach refuses to be propitiated by too

solid sustenance. Half a cold chicken, a couple of hard-boiled eggs, a few slices of cold tongue from your last-killed bison or tsaing, some biscuits and plantains, and, perhaps, a slice of cake (if you possess such a luxury), sees you through the day, the whole being washed down with the hot tea or coffee in the thermos flask. Sticks of Cadbury's chocolate are an excellent stand-by; so are cold stewed apple-rings. One can eat very little meat, and I generally find that the bulk of my cold chicken goes to the Burmans, who are the most omnivorous feeders, I verily believe, on the face of the earth. They will eat anything, from tiger's flesh to lizards; but their special dainty is 'ngapi'—fish buried in wet sand till it is rotten. In the tropics—and especially in the jungle—the golden rule is to eat little and often, and it is advisable (unless on fresh tracks, when one is generally too interested to think of eating) to sit down for ten minutes every four hours or so and have a snack of food.

As to general clothing in camp, a few pairs of flannel trousers, a flannel coat, some flannel shirts, three or four tennis-shirts with Indian gauze undervests, and a couple of pairs of rope-soled shoes are all the clothing that is necessary. To these I would add two silk shirts for night wear, with two pairs of silk Shan baumbies (a loose sort of silk knickerbocker coming

half way down the leg and very wide—most comfortable for night wear in the tropics), and two or three cholera belts. If the sportsman has suffered from dysentery, it is as well to wind a puttie round the waist over the cholera belt at night. This may sound like excessive wrapping up and coddling; but, as a matter of fact, if a silk shirt and silk baumbies are worn, an additional wrapper round the waist will not affect the comfort of the wearer even in the hottest weather. Dysentery is such an awful scourge, and is so hard to get rid of, that anyone who has suffered from this complaint—the most trying of all tropical diseases—will not neglect any necessary precautions. One can shoot while suffering from low fever, but dysentery puts a stopper on any attempt to walk, much less to tramp the jungle.

As to stores, the following articles are necessary. Condensed milk, jam, marmalade, butter, biscuits (Swallow and Ariel's or Huntley and Palmer's lunch biscuits are the best for camp), tea, coffee, cocoa, sugar, curry powder, potatoes and onions. Lard in tins is better than 'ghee' for cooking purposes. Individual taste must decide on further additions to this list if considered necessary; but it must be remembered that while tsaing ground can often be reached with bullock-cart transport, for bison pack-ponies or coolies will be required. The Burman will carry nothing that he cannot sling on to

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the end of a bamboo pole, and a weight of 12 lbs. at each end of the pole is about the limit one man will carry. So that store-boxes weighing between 40 and 60 lbs. will have to be carried by two men, one at each end of the pole and the box slung in the middle. If expense is no object the amount of kit and stores taken need only be limited by the number of men that can be collected to accompany the sportsman; but the greater the number, the greater will be the delay in collecting fresh relays for each march. In out-of-the-way places coolies will be quite content to receive six annas per man for a short march of five or six miles. For a longer march of from eight to ten miles they will expect eight annas per man. At the commencement of the rains—the best time for big-game shooting—the men will be busy on their fields, and it will not always be easy to get them. Fowls and eggs can be got in most villages at varying prices. On the beaten track fowls will cost from eight to twelve annas each; eggs, one anna. In the remoter districts small fowls can be got for two or three annas each, larger ones from four to six annas. Eggs are always rather scarce, and if a plentiful supply is desired it is well to pay one anna each for them, wherever you may be. Milk is unobtainable anywhere, except in towns. The Burmese do not milk their cattle. As regards drinks,

the less liquor consumed in the jungle the better. A bottle of whisky a week should be enough for any man who wishes to keep hard and fit. Soda-water is an unnecessary luxury, but sparklets make a good substitute. A Berkfield travelling filter is very desirable; and all water, except from clear running streams, should be boiled before use. A few bottles of lime juice are useful. Rice can be obtained from any village. Candles in camp candlesticks, with a couple of spare globes, are better than oil in the jungle. Kerosene oil has an unpleasant habit of unaccountably getting mixed with one's food. Tents are a necessity on bison ground, and are useful anywhere. There is a *zayat*, or rest-house, in nearly every village; but these are generally dirty, and are frequently the regular rendezvous of all the pariah dogs in the village. Moreover, they are usually built on a public path leading from the village to the 'Hpoongyi-Kyoung,' or monastery. So that, between villagers passing all day long, pariah dogs on the prowl day and night, the discordant clanging of gongs in the monastery, and the scholars' voices intoning their lessons, there is little privacy for the European occupant. Burmese life can certainly be studied to advantage from the *zayat*, and to the man new to Burma this may be held to compensate for the publicity of his surroundings. If only shooting for a few days it is not worth

while bringing tents; but for a prolonged trip they are undoubtedly necessary. The ordinary 80-lb. Kabul tent is the best all round for the sportsman, with a *tente d'abri* and a small 'servants' pal' for his followers. A couple of large waterproof sheets with eyelet holes serve the double purpose of keeping the floor of the tent dry in wet weather and as a covering to the baggage on the march. Spare rope, string, and a plentiful supply of Sunlight soap should not be forgotten. A light axe is useful, but not absolutely necessary. The Burmese 'dah' answers all purposes, from chopping wood to clearing the jungle. A supply of alum for skins and for clearing muddy water is a desideratum.

Camp furniture of the 'X' pattern is obtainable in Rangoon, and is the most serviceable. It is light, portable and very strong. The sportsman will require a bed with mosquito poles, a folding canvas bath and basin, a chair, a stool and a table. The whole folds up into a very small space, and can be put together by one man in a few minutes. A couple of large felt-covered water-bottles should be taken, preferably of aluminium. A nest of aluminium 'degchies,' a frying-pan and a kettle, together with a chopper, a kitchen knife, fork and spoon, complete the cooking utensils. Enamelware makes the best camp crockery. Earthenware or china is sure to break sooner or later, and aluminium plates

squeak abominably when a knife is drawn across them; while aluminium cups retain the heat much longer than enamel ones—an advantage in Ladak, but quite the reverse in a temperature ranging from 90 to 110 degrees in the shade. For one man the following list of camp crockery should suffice :

One teapot	One pie dish
Two soup plates	Three knives
Two half plates	Three forks
Two quarter plates	Two tablespoons
Two cups and saucers	Two dessert spoons
Three teaspoons	

I have given two of each as a precaution against losses or theft, and also because one occasionally meets a fellow-traveller in the wilds; but the list can be cut down if considered superfluous. A tiffin-basket is useful, and a tiffin-carrier such as all Burmans use indispensable. Two camp tablecloths, half a dozen napkins and a dozen dusters will be required—also matches, packed in an empty biscuit-tin for choice. Flour is unnecessary. Your servant will probably clamour for some to be brought; but he will waste it, together with eggs, butter, milk and sugar, in making awful puddings, or atrocious scones and cakes which are not fit to eat. It is better to rely on biscuits, and to send in to head quarters from time to time for bread,

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if it is practicable to do so. Macaroni is always useful, and a tin of cornflour should be taken in case one is attacked by dysentery, and has to live for a time on slops.

All stores should be carried in small wooden hinged packing-cases (obtainable in Rangoon), with padlock and key, and should not weigh, when packed, over 160 lbs. Clothes are best carried in cane mule trunks covered with Willesden canvas. These are very light and strong, and last for years. They are obtainable from the jail at Myingyan, on the Irrawaddy. A thick Willesden waterproof sheet is required for bedding.

A small medicine case (leather covered) is extremely useful, and can be obtained from the Army and Navy Stores, Calcutta. Whether one is taken or not, the following medicines, in Burroughs & Wellcome's tablets, should always be carried :

Plenty of quinine (for malarial fever).

Phenacetin (for sunstroke).

Salicylate of soda (for rheumatism).

Chlorodyne (for dysentery, cholera, &c.).

Dover's powder (for dysentery or cold).

Cascara Sagrada (or other aperient).

Crystals of permanganate of potash (as a disinfectant, or for snake bite).

Last, but not least, come the servants. This is indeed a difficult question. Servants in Burma

are notoriously bad. If new to the country, do not engage Burmans—your English-speaking Burmese ‘loogalé,’ or boy, is generally a scamp—and if you cannot speak the language they will have little respect for you, and you will fare badly indeed. Good Madrassies are hard to get, and they dislike the jungle intensely. But they can speak a dozen different languages, vilely it is true; but still, so as to be understood. They are clever at camp shifts and expedients. If procurable, the best servants for a shooting expedition in Burma are a couple of good Punjabi Mahomedan servants. The cook will not be so clever as a Madrassi, but he will be able to cook well enough for camp. The Punjabi is hardy as a rule, and very willing, if a good man. He does not mind roughing it, and is less likely to knock up than the Madrassi. A good supply of ‘atta’ and ‘ghi’ should be taken for them, and, without pampering them, they should be made as comfortable as possible. They should be made to sleep off the ground whenever it can be managed, and if during wet weather they are in tents, it should be seen that they have a waterproof sheet to lie on. A present of a little tea or an occasional tin of milk will be much appreciated, and as they cannot touch any meat that has not had the throat cut while still alive by a co-religionist, it is desirable to give them a fowl now and again. Apart from any

other consideration, it pays to look after one's servants in camp. They work all the better for it, and as the success of the trip depends in a great measure on their being happy and well, the sportsman in his own interests is well advised to consider theirs. They should be dosed periodically with quinine, and told to report themselves at once if feeling ill.

It is advisable, though not absolutely necessary, to take two servants with one. They are happier together; besides, there is too much work for one for any length of time. He has to cook, to clean the plates and dishes, make the bed, lay the table, and do a hundred and one things which are always needing looking to in camp. Your one servant is, perhaps, cooking dinner under difficulties in heavy rain. He rushes into your tent with the soup, only to find on his return that a pariah dog has run off with the roast chicken. Master makes a poor dinner on cold sardines, and turns in in anything but a pacific frame of mind, while wretched Pir Dost, wet, tired and irritable, sets to work to cook his own frugal meal, cursing himself the while for being idiot enough to leave his comfortable quarters in cantonments for such a fool's jaunt as this one. Or it may be that after a long march you arrive on your camping-ground just as a steady drizzle sets in. Boy goes off to cook dinner, and master is left with a pack of ignorant

coolies to pitch the tent and get things shipshape. He can get little help from the Burmans. They have probably never seen a tent pitched in their lives, and don't know a pole from a tent-peg. In any case they are tired, and far from inclined to put their shoulders to the wheel. It isn't *their* tent, and if the 'thakin' is so foolish as to wander about in this sort of weather, that is his look-out. They have carted the beastly thing for ten good miles, and that is all they are paid to do. This is their line of argument, though not expressed in words, and there is a good deal in it. All this discomfort and vexation of spirit is obviated by having two servants. One gets tea ready, and then starts to cook his master's dinner, and incidentally his own also, and that of his fellow-servant. The other, meanwhile, puts up the tent, helped by his master and, to some extent, by the coolies. The tent is pitched in no time, the camp furniture put together, and by the time the kettle is on the boil, everything is shipshape and under shelter. Both servants work cheerfully—the one knowing that a comfortable meal is being prepared for him, the other that he has only to cook, and will not be called away for this, that or the other from the warm comfort of the fire. A good orderly is a great stand-by, and one can often be obtained through the courtesy of the Commandant of a Military

Police Battalion. He will act as interpreter, and do all sorts of odd jobs. Do not be persuaded to take a Burman interpreter with you. He will interpret with an eye to his own wishes and those of your trackers rather than your own, and will afterwards sit apart with them and laugh at you and your ignorance of the language. Enough Burmese to carry one through a day's shooting can be very quickly picked up with a little diligence, and it is far better to trust to making yourself understood than to depend on the dubious assistance of an interpreter. Burmans particularly dislike dealing through a third person, and for this reason it is better to dispense even with your orderly's assistance, however straight he may be, as soon as you have picked up enough Burmese to get along with while out shooting. When all else fails the Burman is very quick to understand the language of signs.

A last word as to your trackers. Treat them well, however much they may disappoint you. Take them into your tent occasionally after a long day and give them a stiff dollop of whisky, or better still, rum, if you have it. You need not trouble to water it! Talk with them as much as you can. They will not take advantage of it, and by establishing friendly relations they will work all the harder to try and get you shooting. Faults the Burman undoubtedly has,

but as a set-off he has many engaging qualities, not the least of which is a frank demeanour which never lapses into the subservience of the native of India. Friendly and courteous, he has the instincts of a gentleman.

There is one distinct objection to big-game shooting in Burma which I have not touched on. It is that two sportsmen, except when shooting deer and such-like small fry, cannot work together with any reasonable prospect of success. Good trackers, as I have said, are all too scarce; and to find two really capable men in the same village, or even in adjacent villages, is rare indeed. But even if it could be managed, and the two sportsmen separated, each with his own tracker, one of the two would almost certainly have his tramp for nothing, as game is generally located in one direction. And should each, by the greatest good luck, have got on to the trail of separate beasts, a shot fired by one would certainly put to flight the quarry of the other, even if the report were but faintly heard a couple of miles away. The only plan, therefore, is for two men to take alternate days; but this, though a better arrangement than the other, is still open to a serious objection. Once a beast is killed in a certain locality, all the animals retreat to a safer spot, alarmed not so much by the report of the shots, as by the party of Burmans arriving next day to cut up

the meat. This is not effected without a great deal of noise, which is continued without intermission from the time the village is left till they return with the meat. For six, eight, or perhaps ten, miles from the village the jungle resounds with laughter and shouts, effectually scaring away all animals in the neighbourhood, who communicate their alarm to others in the extraordinary way animals do. Arrived at the place where the dead beast lies, there is the further noise of chopping bamboos, squabbling, shouting and laughter continued for several hours, until the last fragment of meat has been cut up and tied on to bamboos to be carried back to the village. It would indeed be a foolish animal who stopped in that jungle, or anywhere along the route, after this. Next day out goes the sportsman who has not yet fired a shot, but all he can find are the tracks of bison or tsaing departing in a mortal hurry from the fatal spot, and going goodness knows where. On his way home after a long, fruitless day he, perhaps, strikes a fresh trail in another direction, but it is too late to follow it. The next day the other man's turn comes round again, who finds the same trail, or another one, and kills, or perhaps wounds, another beast. And so it goes on. Each time a beast is killed or fired at one of the sportsmen must suffer, until camp is moved to entirely fresh ground, when the game begins

again. Each is spoiling the other's sport, and as one man goes out for the day, the other waits for his return in a fever of impatience, hoping devoutly that he has had no luck, so that it may come to him next day. This sort of thing is hardly conducive to good friendship, and is not unlikely to end in open rupture. It is a great pity, for it would appreciably add to the pleasures of a trip to compare notes with a pal, and to fight one's battles over again by the camp-fire. Fishing is a much more sociable sport for this reason, and often in hill-shooting two men can shoot together without in the least interfering with each other's sport; but with heavy game it is otherwise—in Burma, at all events—more's the pity! Still, in spite of the solitude and the discomfort, the insects and the heat, there is nothing to touch it in the writer's humble opinion. No, dear reader, nothing—that is, in the world of sport—not even getting fast in a monster mahsir, which I admit comes very near it. What a mercy it is that we don't all think alike, though, or there would be no big game left for you and me to shoot by this time!

And now it only remains for me to wish you every success in pursuit of the noble animals I have attempted to describe. If the contents of this book have helped to recall memories of bygone sport to those whose

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shooting days are over ; or if what I have written is likely to prove of assistance, even in a slight degree, to others about to follow this most exciting of all sports in the vast jungles of Upper Burma, I shall be amply repaid for what, after all, has been a pleasant task.

APPENDIX

SHOOTING LOCALITIES

THE following list of districts in which shooting is to be obtained in Upper Burma does not pretend to be a complete one. Those districts only are mentioned in which the writer has himself hunted, or which are known to him to hold game. The barking deer is omitted, as it is found everywhere.

YAMETHIN.—Northern portion: thamin; and in the hills to the east, bison, tsaing, elephants and bear.

MEIKTILA.—Eastern portion: thamin, sambur (scarce). Farther east in the hills, bison, tsaing, bear and (in the rains) elephants.

MAGWE.—Thamin; and in the eastern portion, bison, tsaing, sambur, elephants.

MANDALAY.—Elephants, bison, tsaing and deer.

SAGAING.—Thamin; and in the northern portion, elephants occasionally in the rains.

PAKOKKU.—Thamin; and in the hills to the west, bison, serow, gooral and bear.

NORTHERN SHAN STATES.—Everything except thamin; but a long journey would have to be made into independent territory to get shooting.

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LOWER CHINDWIN.—Eastern portion: thamin, and elephants in the rains. Western portion: bison, tsaing and sambur.

SHWEBO.—Everything except, perhaps, rhinoceros. Elephants in the northern portion all the year round. In the southern portion: thamin, and elephants in the rains.

CHIN HILLS.—Practically nothing. Mahsir fishing.

UPPER CHINDWIN.—Everything except thamin. Rhino scarce.

ARRACAN HILL TRACTS.—Everything except thamin, and tsaing. A good district for rhino and serow.

KATHA.—Everything except thamin, and possibly rhino.

MYITKYINA.—Everything except thamin; excellent mahsir fishing.

RUBY MINES.—Everything except thamin.

GLOSSARY

OF BURMESE WORDS

THE following glossary is intended for the use of the sportsman new to the country who has no knowledge of the Burmese language. No attempt has been made to follow the recognised spelling. To do so would necessitate a key to the pronunciation. It would be quite useless, for instance, to give the word 'kya' for tiger. The uninitiated would naturally pronounce the word as 'kee-a' or 'kai-a,' with about as much chance of being understood as if he had used the English word. Grammarians and Higher Standard exponents of the language will therefore please not quarrel with the writer for using a phonetic spelling, which, while admittedly incorrect, will allow of the words being easily pronounced by an Englishman, and understood by the Burmese villager. To those desirous of obtaining an intimate acquaintance with colloquial Burmese so far as books can give it, the writer recommends the little pocket-book by Mr. C. Durvoiselle, entitled 'How to Speak Burmese in a Month,' and 'Half the Battle in Burmese,' by Mr. R. Grant Brown, I.C.S. Neither of these books, however, is intended for the sportsman,

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and all reference to the jungle and the wild denizens thereof is omitted, thus rendering the following glossary desirable if not absolutely necessary.

NOTE.—A dash over a vowel signifies a long and broad sound. ˘ over a vowel, a short sound. When two or more vowels are marked with a dash above them, they should be pronounced as one syllable, e.g., ‘äpyū’ (white), pronounced ap-yoo.

NAMES OF ANIMALS

<i>Elephant</i> , Sin or Taw-sin	<i>Hog deer</i> , Day-ay
<i>Gaur</i> or <i>bison</i> , Pī-oung	<i>Barking deer</i> , gyee
<i>Banting</i> , Tsaing	<i>Hare</i> , yōng
<i>Rhinoceros</i> , chān (‘n’ pronounced nasally)	<i>Monkey</i> , M̄youk
<i>Tiger</i> , chā	<i>Pheasant</i> , yit
<i>Leopard</i> , Thi(t) or chā-gālay	<i>Partridge</i> , kā
<i>Bear</i> , Wūn or wet-wūn	<i>Jungle fowl</i> , taw-chet or chet
<i>Pig</i> , Wet	<i>Pigeon</i> , gnou
<i>Sambur</i> , sāt	<i>Dove</i> , jō
<i>Brow-antlered deer</i> , thāmin	<i>Quail</i> , ngōn
	<i>Snipe</i> , yay ngōn (water-quail)

POINTS OF THE COMPASS

<i>North</i> , M̄yōuk	<i>South</i> , Toung
<i>East</i> , Āshay	<i>West</i> , Ānouk

COLOURS

<i>Black</i> , āmay	<i>Blue</i> , äpyā
<i>White</i> , äpyū	<i>Green</i> , Āseing
<i>Red</i> , Ānee	<i>Yellow</i> , āwā

NUMERALS

1, ta, tit	5, ngā
2, hnā, hnit	6, chouk
3, thone	7, kōn-nā, kon-nīt
4, lay	8, shīt

9, ko
 10, say, tǎ say
 11, say tǎ, say tit
 12, say hnit
 13, say thone
 (And so on)
 20, hnā say
 21, hnā say tit

30, thone say
 31, thone say tit
 40, lay say
 41, lay say tit
 50, ngā say
 (And so on)
 100, tǎ-ya

To accompany, like la dé or
 like thwa dé
To be afraid, chouk dé or
 chouk pa dé
Age, athet
Air, wind, lay
To get the wind (scent) of, lay
 tike dé
All, ālōn
Always, khā-dain
Animal, thā-goung
Another, tǎchā
To arrive, youk dé
Backwards, nouk-ko
Bad, mā-koung-boo
Bee, Peeā
Behind, nouk-mā
Belly, wūn
Below, Ouk-mā
Big, gŷēē
Bird, hnet
Blood, too-ay
To bolt, run away, pyay dé
To bring, yu-gay
Bullock, nwā
A pair of bullocks, nwa-tǎ-shin
But, tho-thaw-lay
Bullet, kay
Cat, choung
Call, kaw

Can (to be able), nain dé
Careful, thǎ-deeta
Cart, hlé
Cheroot (Burmese), say-lake
Coat, ane-gŷēē
Colour, ǎ-young
Come, lā
Come back, pyan lā
To come out, appear (of an
 animal), twet dé
To cut, lop, kou(k)
Daily, nay-dain
Darkness, mōchōk
Day, nay
Day-before-yesterday, tǎ mŷā
 nay-gā
Day after to-morrow, tǎ
 bek-ā
Difficult, ket-té
To do, lok té
Dog, kway
Down, ouk-ma
Droppings, chee
Early, saw-zaw
Easy, lway dé
Eat, sǎ dé
Egg, oo or che(t) oo
Enough, Taw-bee
Evening, neeā-nay
Far, way dé

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Father, āpay
Female, āmā
Fever, apyā
Few, nay-dé
Field, leh
Find, meet with, twé de
Finished, pyee-byee
Fire, light, mee
First, pātāma
Fish, ngā
Flesh, āthā
Footprint, track, cheeā
Follow, like
Fowl, che(t)
Fresh (of a track), āthit
In future, nouko
To get, yā dé
To give, pay dé
Glass (drinking), pūngwet
To go, thwā dé
Goat, sake
Good, koung dé
Grass, myēt
Grass plain in jungle, quin
To graze, myēt sā de
Guide, lān-pya
Gun, rifle, thēnāt
Half, tă wet
Hand, let
Hard (of ground), mā dé
Hat, ō-tōk
Have, has, is, shee dé
To hear, chā dé
Here, dee-ma
Herd, ōk
Hill, toung
Horn, jo
Honey, peeā-yay
Hornet, peeā-gyēe

Horse, pony, myin
Hot, poo-dé or (of droppings)
 noo-dé
House, ane
How, bě né
How many, bě nā koo
How much, bě-louk
How often, bě nā ka
I, chēnōke or chōke
If, yin
Ill, nā dé
Immediately, chet-chin
It, this, dee-hā
Jungle or wild, taw
Just now, akoo-bé
To keep, tā dé
Knife, dā
To know, thee dé
To kill, that pyit dé
Language, sǎ-gā
Late, nouk chā dé
Lazy, pyin dé
Like, as, lō bé
Little (of animals), gālāy
Little, not much, neh dé
To look, chee dé
To be lucky, kan koung dé
To make, do, lok té
Male, ātee
Man, loo
Medicine, tobacco, say
Milk, nwā-no
Monastery, pōngī choung
Month, lā
Moon, lā
Morning, mǎ-net
Mosquito, chin
Mother, āmay
To move, shooy té

<i>Much, many, meea</i>	<i>To send, kain dé</i>
<i>My, chenōke or chōke</i>	<i>Separate, tā-chā</i>
<i>Name, nā-may</i>	<i>Shoes, boots, pānāt</i>
<i>Near, nee-dé</i>	<i>Skin, thā-yay</i>
<i>Never mind, kaissā mā-shee-boo</i>	<i>Sir, master, thākin</i>
<i>New, āthit</i>	<i>To sit, tine dé</i>
<i>Night, neea</i>	<i>To sleep, lie up, ake dé</i>
<i>No, mā-hōk-boo</i>	<i>Slowly, peebī-peeбі</i>
<i>Nothing, bā-mā mähōk</i>	<i>To shoot, thēnāt p̄yīt dé</i>
<i>Now, ākoo</i>	<i>Small, gālay</i>
<i>To obtain, yā dé</i>	<i>Snake, moo-ay</i>
<i>Often, kānā-kānā</i>	<i>Solitary bull, ātee gway</i>
<i>Old, ā-hōung</i>	<i>Some, tā-cho</i>
<i>On, over, paw-ma</i>	<i>Sometimes, tā-kā-thā-lay</i>
<i>Once, tā-kā</i>	<i>Soon, meean-meean</i>
<i>One, Tā-koo</i>	<i>Stick, dōk</i>
<i>Other, tā-chā</i>	<i>Straight, tay dé</i>
<i>Pagoda, payā</i>	<i>Stream, choung</i>
<i>To pick up, kouk té</i>	<i>Sun, nay</i>
<i>Pipe (tobacco), say-dān</i>	<i>Tail, mee</i>
<i>Place, nee-ā</i>	<i>To take, yū-dé</i>
<i>Plantains, Na-pyaw-thee</i>	<i>Tea, lē-pay-yay</i>
<i>Plenty, meea-meea</i>	<i>Tent, mōgā</i>
<i>Pocket, bag, ake</i>	<i>That, ho</i>
<i>To point, let net p̄yā dé</i>	<i>Thatched shelter, teh</i>
<i>To pull, sway dé</i>	<i>They, their, them, thu-do</i>
<i>To put, tā dé</i>	<i>Then, afterwards, pee-daw</i>
<i>Quickly, meean-meean</i>	<i>There, ho-mā</i>
<i>Rain, mō</i>	<i>Therefore, thōmogoung</i>
<i>To rain, mō yuā dé</i>	<i>Thirsty, yay nāt té</i>
<i>To return, Peean lā dé</i>	<i>This, dee, deeha</i>
<i>Rest-house, zayat</i>	<i>Thorn, soo</i>
<i>Rice (cooked), tāmin</i>	<i>To tie, bind, chee-tā dé</i>
<i>River, myit</i>	<i>To-day, gānay or dee-gānay</i>
<i>Road, lān</i>	<i>To-morrow, nep̄ngā</i>
<i>To run, pyay dé</i>	<i>To-night, neeāgo</i>
<i>Saddle, kōnee</i>	<i>To think, be of opinion, tin dé</i>
<i>To see, myin dé</i>	<i>Tongue, shā</i>

The imperative is rendered by the word 'bā' (*please*) at the end of the sentence, or more emphatically by 'like.' In the negative the verb is preceded by the word 'ma,' and followed by 'nay.'

Ex.— <i>go, or go please</i>	thwā bā.
<i>give me the gun</i>	thēnat chōke gō pay like.
<i>don't talk</i>	sāgā ma pyaw nay.
	(<i>word</i>) (<i>speak</i>)

Certain prefixes precede nouns. The only ones that concern the sportsman are 'youk,' used for human beings; 'see,' used for ponies or riding animals; and 'goung,' used for all animals indiscriminately.

Ex.— <i>A man</i>	loo tā youk (<i>lit.</i> one man, a human being).
<i>I want a pony</i>	myin tā see lo-gyin dé (<i>lit.</i> I want one pony for riding).
<i>A herd of three bison</i>	pī-oung ōk thone goung (<i>lit.</i> a herd of bison—three animals).

THREE USEFUL SENTENCES.

1. *Don't speak.* sāgā ma pyaw nay.
2. *If you see the bison, don't point.*
pī-oung myin yin let net mā pyā nay.
(*see*) (*if*) (*hand*) (*with*) (*point*)
3. *Sit here. Don't move.* dee mā tine bā. Ma shoo-ay nay.

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